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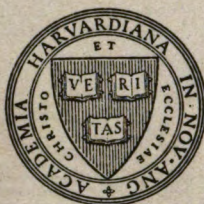
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impossible, to please some, is his aim ; and if successful in his endeavours towards that end, he will, in all gratitude, as in duty bound, exclaim with mine honest host of the hostelry — the Goat-in-Boots—“ *content with it.*”

CRAVEN DERBY;
OR,
THE LORDSHIP BY TENURE.

The Ladye of the Rose:

AN HISTORICAL
Legend,
RELATING TO THE
GREAT FOUNDER OF THE NOBLE HOUSE OF
DARBYE.

VOL. I.

CRAVEN DERBY ;

OR,

THE LORDSHIP BY TENURE.

“ Oft in the stilly night,
’Ere slumber’s chain has bound me,
Fond memory brings the light,
Of other days around me :
The smiles and tears,
Of boyhood years,
The words of love then spoken ;
The eyes that shone,
Now dim’d and gone,
The cheerful hearts since broken.
Thus in the stilly night,
Ere slumber’s chain has bound me,
Sad memory brings the light,
Of other days around me.”

Moore.

“ HERE, then, is all that remains of the ancient baronial castle, and of the once hospitable and splendid halls of our noble ancestors,” said Craven Derby, mournfully to himself, as he stood upon a small portion which remained firm of the battlement of the

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western tower of the outer wall of Derby Castle, gazing with intense interest and feeling upon the various surrounding heaps of ruins of stone, bricks, flints, and mortar as hard as flint, which had fallen from decay and neglect from time to time, and were covered with the herbage of age—weeds, moss, long rank grass, ivy, and thistles. “Yet, art thou in my eyes, respectable and imposing in all thy ruins, for thou art monumental of the fall and the misfortunes of our house;—and I could weep over thee! Disturb them not, ye strangers, but let them crumble and waste away of themselves, if fallen greatness fails not to merit ye’re respect and sympathy. These rude fragments, once, in architectural order and beauty, formed a princely castle of considerable strength and importance. In its prime it was the immortal gift of the renowned King Richard, “Cœur de Lion,” to the great founder of our family, whose descendants have since held it through a succession of many centuries. But with its own glory and pride have passed away the glory

and the pride—no—not the pride, for that is still seated here,” placing his hand emphatically upon his heart, “in all its pristine fire—of our family name, and it is meet that, in thy present condition, thou should’st be owned, as thou art, by the stranger. I do remember me that in my youth, an aged peasant—a servant of my grandsire’s, pensioned by my father—was wont to fill my tender and ready ears with wondrous tales of yore, touching the fame and exploits of our first notable and great ancestor, which have been handed down from sire to son, time out of mind, till, I should suppose, their original consistency must have lost much in the progress of years, and been greatly departed from, both from the bad memory of some, and the inventive memory of others of the detailers; so that, most probably, but few characteristics of the olden tales mark the stories which go current in modern times. The family legends, in fact, are in ruins with the castle, by the tenure of which my forefathers derived their title, till—but let me not

think on it—now, alas ! that title is extinct. That old man, I recollect, gloried in his relation of these traditions, and was more consistent than all the rest who repeated them. I wonder if he yet lives ; I should really like to hear him tell them over again, for they are now but faint upon my memory. I should rejoice to see him again ; I always felt a great regard for the poor old man, more from his extraordinary attachment to our race than that he invariably evinced for myself.—The castle keep, I see, still proudly stands,”—

“ Yez, yez, Maizter Craven,” said a hearty old man who had imperceptibly crept close up to his side, and now interrupted his further cogitations ; and then, as if aware of his thoughts, or what is more likely, judging their nature from the lively glance of his eyes to the castle-keep, which alone of all the castle—and that only in its outward form—remained somewhat in a perfect state, he continued lispingly, but gaily,—

“ When the castle-keep in ruin falls,
Hope may fail of renovated walls ;

But while it towers towards the skies,
Castle—name may from their ashes rise.”

Craven Derby, with a pleasing surprise, incontinently turned round, when he beheld in the old man the identical ancient servant of his family, who he had been thinking of but the moment before. He was leaning with both hands upon a white staff, and bending a little forward with age. He was cleanly dressed, and in the costume of the higher order of peasantry. A light drab coat with large ivory buttons, yellow stuff waistcoat, corderoy small-clothes, blue stockings, and a coarse, but snow-white shirt, around the neck of which an India silk handkerchief was tied in a single knot, and the ends hung loosely over the breast. A pair of shoes, fastened over the instep with a pair of very large antiques-embossed silver buckles, and a broad-brimmed hat, with a small round crown, completed the attire of “old Father Feld-fair,” as the villagers called him. His grey fleecy hair fell over his shoulders, and his cheeks were of a russet brown, richly flushed

with streaks of red, which bespoke the most robust health. His whole appearance inspired the greatest respect, even in strangers.

“What! my good and worthy old friend, Frank Feldfair, here,” he exclaimed, shaking the old acquaintance of his youth heartily by the hand; “right glad am I to see thee, and so young and nimble too, why, by my troth, you are looking younger by ten years than when I saw thee last, and that must be ten good years gone by.”

“Noy, noy, young gentleman, you be prankish as uzual; you be after making me a score yearz younger than I am,” said the good old man, his grey eye lit up with pleasure at the condescending and friendly greeting he had received. “Age must creep on us all, it goes not back, thof the zoight of thee, Maizter Craven, makes me feel again the vigour I have lost in the progressun loike of ten long yearz. Bless me! I thought I should never clap my eyes upon thee again. They have grown a little dimmish of late, yet I thought I could not be deceived az I zaw thee get off

your horze, and mount theze sad ruins, thof you are much changed from the chubby, damask-cheek'd boy you were when last I zaw thee. I heard that you had coome whome with your brother to Darby Coort, and zo thought it would not be long before you visited the old spot. I have since coome to it doily, and, at length, here you be, Maizter Craven."

"Well, well, my good old friend," added Craven Derby, "if you have got older, I am happy to see you look younger, and I hope you feel so. You will live, I trust, to reach even beyond the good old age of your worthy grandfather."

"Ah! poor old grandfaither, Jephon Feld-fair, lived to the age of one of the patrarks of old. He woold have zeen just one hundred and twenty-zeven yearz, had he lived to the Candlemaz quarter, which happened five doys after he died. His tomb-stone,—and a pretty penny it cost,—in Castle-Morton church-yard states it. Ah! Maizter Craven, he zaw strange changes in hiz time. He zarved with one of your honour's noble an-

cestry loike, in all the battles of poor King Charles, the First, against his cruel enemies. He zaw, too, this castle in its perfect state, and lived to zee its decay. If it pleased God, Maizter Craven, I should just loike to live long enof to zee things hereabouts as grand-faither, Jephon Feldfair first zaw 'em, and then I shood doy content. Every generation of us have been in the zarvice of your noble forefaithers, and thus we have run a raice together from the first, they as maizters, we as zarvants, and it goes to my heart to zee things in this lost state, I feel it, Maizter Craven, as if the loss was ours instead of yours." Here the old man gently brushed off with his forefinger a tear that was coursing its way down his aged and furrowed cheek.

The heart of Craven Derby went with every word uttered by Father Feldfair, and all its highly wrought and sensitive sympathies were awakened in a very lively degree.

"But tell me, my excellent friend, where got ye those lines which you uttered but

now?" inquired Craven Derby, "they are simple, but I am very much pleased with them, or rather with the spirit of them."—

"Lor! bless your heart, Maizter Craven, be them loins loiked by you? Why grandfaither, Jephon Feldfair, composed 'em at the ruins, and Braney Pipkins, the Parish Clark, wrote 'em down for him, for poor zoul, he could not wroite himself, though there were but few things bezoides, he was not a ready hand at."

"Well, nevertheless, my good friend, they do him credit—his head as a poet, and his heart as a man," rejoined Craven Derby. "Make me a copy of them, this" placing a five pound note into the old man's hand, "will reward you for your trouble, and be a small token, for the present, of my esteem."

"It goes against me, Maizter Craven, to rezeive thiz money from you, for by the bounty of hiz honour, Sir Henry Darby, I want for nothing," said old Feldfair. "But as I know you woold not loike me to refuse it, I wool put it boy, it wool zarve on an occasion for my eldest grandson," thrusting the five pound

note into the pocket of a "woont"-skin* tobacco-case, which he then safely tied with a piece of leather string, and afterwards deposited in the pocket of his inexpressibles, which he then cautiously buttoned up. "I am woundily obleeged to you, Maizter Craven, thank you, thank you, for't. Now, coome from this place, coome, it always made you grieved hearted. May be you athirst, I have some Barland Perry at my old cot, not to be matched, I'll warrant, in all Wooztersheere; and if there be one coop better than anither, your honour sharl har it, that, and all the cottage contains, you are mortal welcome to: coome then; my zon, and all his children wouold zo-loike to zee you. The children were all little ones when you were in these parts before; you woolnut know 'em now, they're grown zo, but I think they'll know you, Maizter Craven, for we doily talk about you. I have somut boy me, some papers, wrotings loike, which I have long zaved for you alone; coome

* A Worcestershire provincial term for mole-skin. The peasantry of many counties are very choice of a tobacco-case made out of the skin of a mole.

to our cottage, and I wool give 'em to you. They are all about Zir Lenal Darby, Baron Darby, King Richard, Zaladin, the infidels and Christians, their battlings and foightings, and the beautiful Lady of the Air, about all which, I uzed to tell you, before you went to Oxford College ; I had all the tales, you loiked zo much, from out of theze papers."

" Indeed," said Craven Derby. " If any thing beyond the inducement of seeing the comforts and happiness of your home were wanting, it would be amply made up by what you promise to give me. Do you still occupy the same cottage which was so familiar to me when a boy ? "

" Noy, Maizter Craven, noy," answered old Feldfair, shaking his head. " My poor old cottage in which I were born, and the mill, hard upon it, were pulled down to make way for the canal and the new rowd,—the late improvements of the age, as they call it, and people talk zo much about, thof I zee no improvements in having water, and stones, and gravel in place of the green sward. The land

all about is zo cut in quarters loike, and disfigured zo, that a body now scarcely knows his own land, or the part of the country he lives in. The meadow which was at the back of the cottage,—az pretty a piece of grass az you woold wish to zee in a walk of a thousand miles,—iz all cut through, and iz now a timber and coal yard. The hill from which on my way home, in the evening, from Darby Coort, I uzed to zee the mill, and my cottage, and my son's children playing 'afore it,—and I always forgot the labours of the day at the zoight of 'em—iz cut down too; the face of the country be changed zo, and every thing be zo altered for the woorzt. I wonder what old grandfaither, Jephon Feldfair, if he could roise out of his grave, woold zay to all these doings,—why, I'll warrant, Maizter Craven, that he woolnut know Wooztersheere again, I be daz'd if he woold," striking the ground forcibly with his staff, to give more weight to his declaration.

Craven Derby listened with great good nature to the loquacious old man, but he could

not suppress a smile that arose at the regrets he so impressively expressed at the altered features of the country, arising from the wonderful undertakings of modern times, the result of man's ingenuity and enterprise to facilitate the intercourse between all parts of the country, in which the whole of its interests,—political, commercial, and domestic,—are so deeply concerned. He made no comment, for he saw that it would be useless to attempt,—and the endeavour, he considered, would be felt unkind in him,—to shake the affections of Father Feldfair for the soil and appearances he had been familiar with for near a century,—and years cover such associations and prejudices with a mantle of deference and respect ;—though, at first, he felt disposed to explain the vast utility of such mighty undertakings making their way all over the face of the country, without regard to private feelings or interests. He also justly thought, that whatever tended to quicken or slacken the works of man in their use or application, must be so much time gained or lost in the life of man,

and that, therefore, his age may be fairly considered as lengthened or shortened, in proportion to the expedition or delay in the execution of the various concerns and transactions of the world,*—an immense consideration, besides the infinite advantages arising from dispatch in all things.

But the great evils to be apprehended from the prodigious improvements which, in late years, have taken place, and are now still taking place in all kinds of mechanism, especially in connexion with steam, are, that by thus anticipating time in the rapid and cheap production of all sorts of manufacture and commodities by the use of such machinery, a

* Somewhat to illustrate this opinion, it may not be amiss to mention that the time was, and that not a hundred years ago, when a journey from Worcester to London occupied about ten days or a fortnight; about three weeks or a month there and back. The whole trip can now be performed in about twenty-four hours; and on a rail road, the same distance is gone over in about a quarter of that time. Formerly the journey from Worcester to London, (and of course it was the same with all corresponding or greater distances) was considered so great an undertaking, that the parties, before commencing it, were accustomed to make their wills, and take a formal leave of their relations and friends, scarcely expecting to see each other again.

supply is created over the current demand, the fruits of which are an excess of stock, and an overtrading; and that mechanical power, superseding, in a great degree, physical or manual labour, will produce a supply of the latter over the demand for its employment, which is likely to augment wonderfully with the progress of years and the increase of population, so that very general distress may be justly dreaded, though, it is devoutly to be hoped, that requirements of a new nature for the employment of the industrious classes will arise, so as take off and engage in fresh channels, the superabundance of this unemployed labour among them; and, thereby, wholesomely meet and correct the latter evil;—the overtrading must be left to correct itself. But to return to Craven Derby and the aged peasant, Frank Feldfair.

“So they have disturbed you from your ivy-mantled cottage, have they?” said Craven Derby. “I must confess it was a very comfortable little retreat; but, I hope, they have provided for you as well elsewhere?”

“ Pretty zo, zo, for the matter of that, Maizter Craven,” replied father Feldfair. “ I am now living in the hamlet by the side of Bennuttree * Pitch, near to farmer Oakhurst, of the Holly Bush. It is only three moiles across the common, over the Fox-holes.”

“ I know the place well,” rejoined Craven Derby. “ Many a good run, in the wake of a hare, have I had over those hills. Lead the way, my worthy friend, I am in a condition to do ample justice to your Barland Perry.”

They now descended from the dilapidated ramparts, and wound down the road-way which formerly led from the Castle to the open country, but which was now nearly choked up with rubbish and briars. It was a thorny, stony path, and some caution was necessary in descending it, in order to avoid stepping upon some loose fragment or other, which might be the means of precipitating them

* In Worcestershire, and the country about, walnuts are called “ Bennuts.” A fine old walnut-tree standing by the side of it, gives the name of Bennuttree, to the pitch, or wide gap, the entrance of which it overshades.

headlong over the side, down a considerable height. At length, the broad open country was reached without accident, and, the end of an hour, brought them to the door of the hamlet. A stout, healthy, and flaxen-headed little boy was seated on a log of wood, by the door-way, eating an apple, who, on seeing his grandfather accompanied by a stranger, dropped the half-finished apple, and hastened into the cottage. Before he had time, however, to make the communication he intended, the child fell over a frail that was lying in his way in the middle of the room, which made him bellow most lustily, more from fright than injury, which is so common among children.

“Ah! drabbit-ye, you little limb you, get up immediately; I’ll pinch you to death, nearly, if I have to come near you;” exclaimed the good mother of the cottage, who was, at the same time, ladling some apple-dumplings from out of a large pot which hung over a blazing wood fire, and was boiling beside a chine of bacon, broad Windsor beans, peas, and new potatoes, all together, for dinner.

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“Hush, hush, Misses Feldfair, cease all this hubbub,” said the old man. “I’ve brought Maizter Craven Darby to zee ye, and all the children. Coome, walk in, Maizter Craven, walk in; be pleased to be zeated, Zir, and I’ll zee to your horze.”

Mrs. Feldfair, as she was spoken to by her father-in-law, had just raised another dumpling from the caldron, but the action of turning rapidly round, whirled it into the middle of the room, and smashed it to pieces. She ejaculated “drabbit the dumpling,” and then stepped forward a few paces, and having erected her person very formally, she made three or four very low curtsies to the visitor, Then turning to her children, who, upon the entrance of Craven Derby, had flown from all parts of the room, into one corner of the wide fire-place, under the chimney, and there stood in a cluster, staring at him with gaping mouths, she cried, “George Feldfair, where are your manners, lad?—Pull of your hat, Jemmy Feldfair, and make a bow to the gentleman.—Cicely Feldfair, what are you about,

where's your curtsy, Miss ?—Tommy Feldfair, pick up the dumpling, and give part of it to your brother Willem. All the scollarding in the world be lost upon ye all, I zee."

These five, and a little baby in the cradle, which was placed upon a large deal table that served the purpose of dresser and dining-table, composed the family of John Feldfair, the old man's only son, who was expected home every moment from harvesting, and who shortly afterwards arrived. He paid his respects to Craven Derby after his best manner :—"How-de-do, Zir, I hope you be very well, Zir. Misses, can I have my dinner now?" which latter inquiry he made in an under tone. A clean white cloth was quickly spread upon the table, with knives, forks, and pewter-platters shining as bright as silver. The smell arising from the dinner, apple-dumplings, and two flagons,—one of Barland Perry, and the other of Cyder, fresh drawn, was by no means disagreeable, but, on the contrary, it had the effect of provoking Craven Derby's appetite so much, that the sight of

the reeking provisions was extremely welcome to him, though the chine, peas, beans, potatoes, and apple-dumplings were dished up in the same large round pewter-platter ;—somewhat a greasy mess, though not unpalatable to hunger sharpened by long fasting, sound health, and exercise. A rough repast of this kind, coming suddenly before a man already under the influence of certain cravings, is frequently enjoyed with a relish which does not always fall to the lot of more delicate fare to receive. Be this as it may, Craven Derby sat himself down in the chair placed for him, at the homely board, with great alacrity, and shewed by devouring three good slices down “the alderman’s walk” of the chine, and a corresponding quantity of Windsor beans, that the rude meal, “par accident,” did not come amiss to him. The apple-dumplings were declined, but the Barland Perry was of such excellent quality that the flagon was replenished again and again, till its virtues began to exhibit themselves in an elevation of his spirits, beyond their sober dimensions, while

upon the Feldfairs who drank twice as much as himself, it had no effect whatever. Dinner over, (at every mouthful of which, apologies were made for the badness of the fare) the younger Feldfair, who had little or nothing to say for himself, and was a rough, but honest sample of an industrious, sturdy, and straightforward agriculturist, went back to harvesting, glad to be released from a restraint which is very commonly felt by country people, who, generally, are very coy and shy in the presence of strangers, especially of strangers superior to themselves. The old man, therefore, was left to do the duties of the hamlet's hospitality, whilst the good "Misses" paid attention to the domestic economy of the hamlet. A small round oak table and a couple of chairs were now placed outside the cottage, in the shade of an elder tree, which was loaded with berry. A most luxuriant honeysuckle covered the front and thatch of the hamlet, and entwined its slender stem amid the branches of a large rose tree, full of roses and buds, whose sweets, together, scented the air with the most delicious perfume.

The situation of the hamlet was extremely fine. It stood upon high ground, and had a wide expansive view, which embraced the whole range of the Malvern hills. The day was sunny, and the prospect was lively and pleasing to a great degree. Craven Derby was scanning over the beauties of the country, while Father Feldfair was busily engaged in placing upon the oak table two tobacco pipes, his favorite "woont"-skin tobacco case, containing the best "cannister," and two mugs. He now made his appearance, bearing in his hand a fresh flagon of Perry from the "drink house,"—*i. e.* the cyder store, which was situated at the back of the hamlet, and was partitioned off from the stable, and contained five hogsheads, besides the two in tap, of Perry and Cyder, which, together with four others they had drunk out, they made last season from the fruit of their little orchard.

"Be pleased to be zeated, Maizter Craven," said the old man, taking a chair himself. "I always enjoy my 'old friend' after dinner; you Zir, woont object to one, wool you Zir?" shoving the tobacco case and a pipe, with the

end of his own, towards Craven Derby who declined joining Father Feldfair in his "old friend," but renewed his devotions to the flagon, and took off a mug to his continuance to enjoy his "old friend" for many years. The flaxen-headed boy now made his appearance, bearing some filberts, apples, and pears in a plate. He had been nicely washed, and his plump rosy cheeks were shining from the discipline they had undergone. A clean pinafore had been put on; it was patched all over, and stained with fruit. He was altogether an interesting sample—the beau ideal—of a healthy peasant's child.

"Here, Willem Feldfair, lad, take this to your mammy," said the child's grandfather, giving him the note, the gift of Craven Derby. "Tell mammy to put it up, and then bring me a loight."

The children now, one after the other as they were washed and put to rights, issued from the hamlet, each bearing some little present of fruit, or flowers. Craven Derby was greatly pleased at the neat, clean, and

tidy appearance of all the children, and commended highly their mother's attention to their comforts, cleanliness, and health.

“ Ah ! my son's Misses, Maizter Craven, iz a tidy hooman enow,” answered Father Feldfair, lighting his pipe, “ zearch the country through, you woont find a bettermost. She makes all the Cyder and Perry ; brings up the poultry ; feeds the pigs ; corns the bacon, and makes the butter and cheeze. The cottage gives us a roight of common, Zir, and we now have out feeding two cows and a large flock of geese, which we thus keep free almost of all cost. She 'tends Woozter, Upton, and Tewkesbury markets, and keeps all the children clean, az yon zee now, every day bezides. Ah ! Jack Feldfair had the luck on't in lighting upon a Misses zo induztrous and careful az Precilly Feldfair. She's worth a hundred of her elder zizter Molly, the Misses of Harry Thornditch, whose children be brought up to nothing but scampish ways. Ah ! Maizter Craven, there wool be a parish or a justice job of it in that quarter

some if these doys, if they dwont mend their doings. Inzthead of being employed, I be daz'd if the lads baint all day long at the public,* smoking their poipes and drinking, and the eldest of 'em baint no more than zeven-teen; no good can come of it, Zir. I always told Harry Thornditch that hiz farm waz 'nt worth zo much by a hundred a year, because of the public being zo near it, and that hiz lads would be no better than idlers through it: zo it's turning up, for the're almost too lazy to attend to the cyder mill, or fetch up the cows to milk.

Whenever the lads be wanted, they muzt be fetched whome from the public to be zure. These publics are filled with bad characters of every zort—poachers, fowl-stealers, gypsies, and stragglers of all kinds: nothing but harm can happen from such company, Maizter Craven. If those lads be mine, instead of being the lads of Harry Thornditch, I woould public 'em by warming their jackets well for e'm with my stick, I be daz'd if I woould'nt, Zir."

Father Feldfair's "old friend" just lasted

* A country inn on a bye-road is termed "a Public."

through this discourse, which was interlarded with a corresponding number of whiffs and pauses, and as he was beating the ashes out upon the turf, intending to replenish the pipe, Craven Derby rose to take his departure, saying, "I must now away, my good friend; I shall bear your grand-children in my remembrance, and when opportunity offers, and they merit it, I will see to their advancement and comforts in life. You spoke of being in possession of some writings which you design for me, shall I take them with me now?"

"To be zure you shall; but what's your hurry, Maizter Craven?" replied the old man, rising and leading his visitor into the cottage. "Pricilly, Misses, where's the key of the bureau?"

While the key of the bureau was being fetched from a small up-stairs room, by Mrs. Pricilla Feldfair, Craven Derby had an opportunity of noticing the interior arrangements and ornaments of the cottage. The bacon-rack fixed to the ceiling, upheld five

fine sides of bacon, two small kegs of liquors, three cheeses, an old sword, and a gun. A side of bacon was suspended also on each side of the wide chimney-place. There was little else to notice besides a form, a few chairs, and a couple of tables. The sun now penetrated the cottage through the lattice window, and was shining upon the bureau, which was standing in a remote corner of the room. It was made of oak, and the whole front of it was most curiously carved, and kept in excellent polish. Craven Derby was very much surprised to see the arms of his family surmounted with an earl's coronet, exquisitely cut out in the front of it, from which circumstance, he had no doubt that this ancient piece of furniture belonged to his family at the period of their baronial pride.

"This old bit of goods grandfather, Jephon Feldfair, bought when Squire Thistle-ton, the racer man, near Castle-ditch *, was zold up," said the old man, advancing and applying the key to it. "Here be a curious

* "Castle-ditch" was an ancient castle belonging to the Lords

zeecret place in the lid, which was found out by accident, whereby I got to zee theze papers. The hinges of the lid were old and broken, and one day the lid fell violently to the ground, when open flew the zeecret place, and out tumbled some papers, which I again carefully collected together, thinking they moight be papers of some consequence loike, from their being found in such a funny place."

The old man now applied his thumb to what appeared but a small joint of the inside of the bureau, when the inside of the lid instantly opened, dividing it completely, and exhibiting a space between the two sides of nearly three inches deep, but which, when closed, appeared a solid piece of oak. From this singular hiding place he took a quantity of papers, written, for the most part, in old English.

"Theze be the papers, Maizter Craven, and a hard matter I've had to keep 'em for ye,

Somers. Of late years it was razed to the ground, and Eastnor Castle, the magnificent and beautiful residence of Earl Somers, has been built near its site in its stead, and a most lovely place it is.

the children have often cried for 'em when I've been reading 'em, and the good Misses, too, has frequently wished to tare pieces off for domeztic uzes. I wuz determined, though, to keep 'em, when I found they related to your noble forefaithers; and, that one day, when you would know how to take care of 'em, I would give 'em to you, for you were always zo pleazed at the stories I uzed to tell you out of 'em. I zhoold not have known a bit how to read 'em, but for zome yearz I uzed to officiate as parish clark, at Longdon church, in the marshes; and had to read out of books with zimilar wroiting loike in 'em; and the wroiting at last got to be very familiar to me, zo I could understand without much difficulty all they contained."

Craven Derby folded the papers carefully into a roll, had his horse brought out which he instantly mounted, and then took leave of his honest-hearted host, promising to again taste his Perry very soon, and, that he would then make 'a purchase of the bureau, if he were not disinclined to part with it.

The next day Craven Derby amused himself in overlooking his treasure, which he found in a sadly deranged and confused state. In some places the writing was very pale and indistinct, and in others — here nearly, and there wholly obliterated, but he saw enough in the papers to deeply interest him. They had evidently been written at different periods of remote antiquity, by a person who had taken great pains to collect together the materials and events which they record, and much labour in threading them into a form of some consistency, but which they had now in a very great degree lost. Craven Derby, however, immediately set about putting them in order, and, soon after, produced the following transcription of the old manuscripts, supplying the deficiencies, of which he met with a very many, according to the spirit of the context.

The Ladye of the Rose:

AN HISTORICAL

Legend

**Of the Twelfth Century, relating to the great Founder of
the Noble House of Darbye.**

The Ladye of the Rose.

CHAPTER I.

"Appeared, not of this earth, but yet stood on it."

"Rides upon the wind and directs the storm."

THE castle clock had just tolled eleven heavily upon the air ; the night was dark and stormy ; the rain was descending in sheets ; and the wind whistled mournfully through the trees, when Agatha, the under housekeeper, on her way across the court, from the warder's lodge to the Round Tower or Keep,—wherein resided the Lord Godolphin and his lady, with their chief domestics, and principal officers-at-arms,—suddenly encountered the tall figure of a woman, whose wild appearance was sufficiently distinguishable in the darkness that prevailed,

D

as nearly to scare away the few senses, with which dame nature had endowed that faithful domestic.

At the sight of so singular an object at so unseasonable an hour, Agatha, in the greatest terror, screamed aloud for help, while she hastened with all the expedition a pair of thick clumsy legs — each the circumference of the body of a person of ordinary size, and a trunk they had to support, which was in fair and equal proportion with them,—would admit of. What was wanting in sense with poor Agatha, was amply made up in flesh, for she was nearly as round as she stood high, and she measured from head to foot, exactly four feet six inches. Her speed, after all, to escape from the supposed danger, therefore, was no greater than the step of a common built person, although it was put out to the utmost, under the influence of the dreadful alarm which had been excited in her mind by the strange personage intercepting her path, who struck her imagination, at once, as a being of another world.

The affrighted Agatha, however, waddled with all imaginable haste to the house-keeper's room, where all the principal persons of the household, male and female, nightly assembled to take their last meal, previously to all separating for the night to their several apartments, crying out lustily all the way—"murder, help, murder, help, help."

On this particular occasion they were staying up rather later than the order and discipline of the castle usually allowed, on account of two messengers having that day arrived from Normandy, bringing intelligence of a family nature from the brother of the Lady Godolphin, who was a Norman chieftain of the highest rank and merits.

At these social meetings of the domestics, many tales of chivalry and wonder were told by one or other of the brave retainers of the Lord Godolphin, or of his friends on a visit at the Castle; and many a legendary story of superstition and dread were related by different members of the household, many of whom had repeated their stories so often, that in the

simplicity of their hearts, they not only believed them to be true, but they would, sometimes, go so far as actually to vouch for their authenticity.

The wood-fire blazing cheerfully upon the hearth, was surrounded from the right hand recess of the wide fire-place to the left, by a circle of these happy and communicating souls; and the sack—which the butler had supplied in abundance, in order, as he alleged, to refresh the two strangers after the toils and fatigues of a long journey, and also to do ample credit to his master's hospitable halls, as well as to the stores and quality of the vinous liquor, —was going merrily round, while all were paying an attentive ear to a singular and marvellous story which was being related by the armourer.

Who the parties were, concerned in the blood-chilling deed, does not appear from the tale as given by the armourer; but, no doubt, all the particulars are faithfully recorded in that *great book*, in which, it is said, are written all our thoughts and actions; yet,

should it contain but half of our acts, and a thousandth part of our thoughts, at the grand and awful moment when that dread book shall be opened, on the judgment day, the stoutest heart would have reason to shake and tremble with fear and apprehension, whether it had been covered by the crown, the mitre, the helmet, or by noble or plebeian robes.

When Huberto, one of the messengers, had concluded the details of an adventure of war, in which, as naturally may be supposed, he cut the most conspicuous figure himself, the armourer desired the large goblet, out of which they had been drinking, to be well filled, and then passed round for all to take a hearty draught, when he would relate to them a scene which he had witnessed; but he could not venture upon the task till his auditors were sufficiently fortified in their spirits, as they would all require strong nerves to listen, without terror, to the dismal tale which would make all their hair to stand on end, as had often been the case with his own by the bare remembrance of it, who had even

seen and heard what he should unfold to them.

At these prefatory remarks of the man of arms, a general move took place among the chairs, which were drawn, as if by one impulse, closer together, and nearer to the fire ; the fire was stirred up, and an additional log or two put upon it ; and then in passing the cup, each seemed to drink deeper of the sack than they had done before, more, no doubt, in accordance with the armourer's recommendation to strengthen their minds to hear the tale of horror with which they were threatened, than from any particular inclination, or the great relish they had for what they were taking, though, it must be confessed, it was somewhat inviting to the palate.

" You men at arms, you warriors," then proceeded the armourer in a high tone, " may talk as you please of cleaving helmets in two with your battle-axes ; of pinning your enemies to the ground with your spears ; of slaying with your swords ;—though it does not become me to speak disparagingly

or lightly of such valourous exploits, seeing the high and responsible office I hold in this stout castle; and seeing the fine order and condition in which I keep the armour and the arms, ready at all times for use at the first blast of the warder's horn announcing the approach of foes, though I say it who should not say it; but yet for all that—as I was saying—all that you have done;—all that you can do;—all that you have seen;—all that you have heard;—all that you can tell,” pursued the armourer, now lowering his voice, and looking cautiously around him, “cannot compare in wonder to what I saw and encountered many different nights, with little or no variation, when I was not much higher than this table.” Using the action to the word, he here struck heavily the table which was near him, and which returned a hollow sound to the blow.

“O! lor; O! lor, what noise is that?” said the old house-keeper, startled by the sudden sound, and interrupting the armourer: but after a short pause of alarm, she con-

tinued, " pray don't, good master armourer, strike the table so hard again, you really frighten a body out of one's wits. Dear me ! the lamp is burning unusally dim to night ; pray do, Beatrice, trim it that we may see one another better, and see all round the room, for the back of we is quite in darkness."

" Ah !" then renewed the armourer after finishing, at one draught, the remainder of the goblet, which was half full,—for he had no mind, at least in this instance, to give advice without setting a good example as well. Having thus fortified his own courage, he handed to the butler the empty vessel to be replenished, in order that his auditors should not be deficient in the same quality of firmness, so far as drinking deep of the beverage could inspire. " Ah ! I have heard of stories about the ghosts of murdered knights and ladies, appearing in the dead hours of night, in the shade of the moon, but I have never yet been induced to tell what I saw and heard when I was at home,

and very young ; however, I will no longer keep the secret to myself, for I verily believe the extraordinary appearances which I witnessed, relate to some real transaction of life, which at some time or other may be brought to light."

When the good keeper of the castle arms so pompously announced that he had never told the tale before, he was going a little too far, for there were many then present who had heard it so often, that, if they could not exactly relate it so circumstantially, yet they could repeat the principal incidents of it almost as accurately as the armourer himself. This fore-knowledge, however, in no shape lessened their relish to hear, over and over again, a story marked with so many unaccountable and marvellous features. The armourer's prefatory observations, therefore, awakened a deep interest in all ; upon the poor old house-keeper, who thoroughly believed in ghosts, they had a peculiar effect in rousing her apprehensions and trembling fears, which were always ex-

cited to a lively degree whenever the subject was the topic of conversation.

“Dear me!” she exclaimed again, feeling still more fidgetty in her large high-backed arm’ chair, although she was in the corner of the fire place, and surrounded by full thirty persons, some of whom were men of battle, and others men of mettle, for be it understood that it is not every man of battle who is a man both of battle and of mettle; “dear me!” said she, “how very dull the fur burns: good Master Huberto, pray give it another stir.” Huberto stirred the fire—“Well, I declare, if ever I saw such a blue flame in a fur before. Ah! me, the Lord and our Lady of St. Agnes’s font, bless and preserve we all, I pray.”

“Well, as I was saying,” then said the armourer, “but stop—where was I?”—where did I leave off?—”

“Why you have not commenced the story yet, good master armourer,” instantly cried a dozen voices in a tone of impatience.

“What! have I made no beginning yet?—Let me see—hey—no—well then, as I was

saying," repeated the armourer, who now proceeded with his narrative to a conclusion without further interruption of any importance, so profound was the anxiety of his auditors, not to lose a word he had to say. It was observed, however, that the armourer had never been so minute and precise in every particular as on this occasion. "Well, then, as I was saying, I was born in a small hamlet, made of rough wood felled in the neighbouring forest, (which was a royal chase) and cased with clay and gravel, obtained from the bottom of a deep chasm, at the summit of which, and within a few yards of the brink, the hamlet stood. The clay (which was of a limish quality) and gravel interspersed with the rude thick clumps of wood, made a wall full two feet thick, which, by being much exposed to the influence of sun, wind and weather without, and there being a large rousing fire continually kept up within, had cemented into a consistency as hard as any rock, and might equally defy the inroads of time, or the destroying power of a battering ram. Moss and

ivy grew nearly all over the sides of the hamlet, and wall-flower and wild herbs thickly covered the roof. In this rude, but not unpleasant cot, (which consisted only of one room) I first drew breath.

“Different springs of water gushed out from both sides of the chasm or precipice, which, mingling together in their descent, they formed a large body of water, which then rushed furiously downwards, dashing with violence upon projections of rock that here and there intercepted its passage, that caused it to send upwards, in different directions, pyramids of foam and water, giving the cascade the appearance of a cataract in miniature of the wildest description. The rush of the torrent, which was more or less impetuous according to a wet or a dry season, produced a loud and confused roar of many sounds, a thousand echoes of which could be heard among the distant hills, which towered towards the western sky in the form of an amphitheatre, with the most imposing grandeur.

“Tradition had handed down, and it was

generally believed, that an earthquake had originally made the division or chasm, which was only on one side of the mountainous hill, but which in places had very much widened where the rush of the waters bore with the greatest force. On each side of the chasm, where the springs and rains had partly washed away the mould, clay, and gravel about them, pieces of rock or granite stone, of which the hill was principally composed, jutted out, and upon many of these abutments of rock, a few trees and different kinds of herbage had lodged, and continued to flourish ever since they had fallen in at the awful convulsion of nature, which had rent the hill in twain. Here eagles and other large birds of prey took refuge 'far from the haunts of men;' built their nests, and increased 'after their kind' in perfect security. Hence the denomination the hill bore of 'the Falcon's Perch.'

"The appearance of the western aspect of the hill was wild and dreary in the extreme, though the view from its brow was grand and picturesque beyond description. The hill

sloped abruptly to the beautiful and fertile plain beneath, exhibiting a rugged surface of jutting rock of various prominences, interspersed, in a few places, with clusters of trees, wild shrubs, briars, brush-wood and heath, some of which would flower for a short season only, and but weakly, from the sterility of the bed in which they grew. The barrenness of the soil was more apparent in respect to the trees whose roots were more than half uncovered; many of their branches dead from age, and want of sap; and the few live branches, at the proper season only, bore a few leaves which soon reached maturity, turned brown, withered and died away; so that the whole face of the hill on this side, for three parts of the year, wore a dark, wild and desolate appearance, in consequence of which it was as well known as 'The Black Mountain,' as 'The Falcon's Perch.'

"Midway down, the chasm, or 'the Devil's Pitch,' as it was commonly called, narrowed; and the two sides were connected by a bridge made of the trunks of two large oak trees

joined together. A railing three feet high ran along the inner side, and the bed of the mountain waters, was near 200 feet beneath the bridge. The bridge was seldom traversed, though to some parts about, it cut off many miles, as it was not only considered dangerous, but it was held in great dread by the country people, whose fears and apprehensions were constantly excited by rumours current among them of strange noises, occasionally, being heard, and still stranger appearances being observed about it, and in its neighbourhood. The names, too, which had been given to it of 'the Bridge of Spirits,' or, 'the Witches' Pass,' tended, no doubt, to confirm the universal horror in which it was held, and to scare the peasantry and others away from it.

"The torrent foamed tumultuously beneath the Witches' Pass, gushing out at the base of the Devil's Pitch with resistless force, whence, losing its power in space, it spread itself into a meandering stream, which then pursued its serpentine course, through the lovely plain,

—named, ‘the Vale of Flowers,’ from the innumerable quantity of flowers which spontaneously grew, and decked the face of nature all about—so smoothly and transparently, that no one could suppose that its source could be so wild, excited, turbulent and noisy.

“My father was a forester, and lived the life of a free-booter.* He supported his wife and me, who was his only child, principally by going, occasionally, upon distant missions for the neighbouring barons, by wood-cutting in the adjacent forest, and by bringing down with his bow—in the use of which he was very expert, and without which he never went abroad—a deer, or a wild goat, whichever might happen to cross his path, in his different excursions. Thanks to his great skill that way, the hamlet was never without a good stock of venison and goat flesh.

“The Lord Rodolph de Warrenne, whose

* A freebooter in those times was by no means considered in the light of a robber,—the modernly and commonly implied inference of the term—though his life was lawless, wild, and roving.

Castle was seven leagues off, frequently had occasion for my father's services, and always rewarded him very liberally, for any he was capable of rendering him. I was indebted for what little education I have received to this good lord, who ordered a lay-brother* of a monastery of Benedictines, which was situated not far off, to attend to my instruction, and he bestowed upon me much time and pains, for which great kindness, I feel deeply thankful to him, to this hour. In gratitude for the Baron's goodness to our family, whenever my father killed any thing rare, which he thought worthy of the good lord's acceptance, he lost no time in conveying it to the Castle. This task he would always perform himself, as much out of an intention to testify his respect for the Baron, as in the hope of

* In former times the ecclesiastics were, principally, the only educated men, which circumstance, together with their sacred character and holy calling, will probably account for the infatuated awe and reverence in which they were then, and for a long time after, universally held; and the extraordinary influence they possessed over the less gifted of the rest of mankind. In later times a more rational estimation is formed, generally, of the clergy; though they still possess, as it is meet they should, very considerable sway.

receiving some fresh commission. One particular day he had the good fortune to slay a fine fat young fawn; and on the following morning—the evening of which I shall never forget—he left the cottage in order to present it to the Baron.

“At this period of time, my poor mother had been dead a year; I was, therefore, left alone to take care of the hamlet, though its situation and appearance were quite a sufficient protection against outrage and rapacity, even from the marauder of the most desperate fortune. Its furniture consisted, simply, of a square wooden table, and five oaken chairs of rude workmanship; and its riches and ornaments of a rusty old sword; a dagger of very peculiar and curious make, having holes running up the centre of the blade—some round, others triangular, and some in the shape of a diamond; an arrow’s head, barbed at the point; and a very curious hunting horn, mounted in gold, with a gold tassel and cord. The sword, dagger, arrow’s head, and horn, were sus-

pended from hooks for ornaments over the fire-place.

“ My father used to say that the holes in the blade of the dagger, which were from the point to the hilt, were designed to tear the flesh from the interior of a wound in withdrawing the dagger, so that if it did not search a vital part, the wound would still prove mortal from mortification, arising from the interior of the wound being so violently lacerated; and if the holes of the dagger be poisoned, the poison would be conveyed into the wound with a deadlier certainty. A wound, however slight, from so dreadful and ingenious a weapon, must prove certain death. The dagger, the arrow's point, and the horn, were found by my father, when collecting, by the side of the waterfall, some gravel and clay with which to repair the hamlet.

“ I was just turned fourteen years of age, and was generally considered by those with whom I had intercourse, to be, for my years, a lad of some parts and promise. I wanted my father to allow me to accompany him on his

journey, for I did not relish the idea, of being left alone in the hamlet, but he would not comply with my wish.

“I had heard many strange stories which had reference to the hamlet, the most intelligible of which was, that it had afforded shelter and refuge to a discarded retainer of a nobleman, who was supposed to have committed some horrid crimes, and had afterwards met with a strange and frightful death. A few years before this latter event, it was also said, that a rich and gallant baron and his youthful son, on their way home to an old but stately tower, which stood upon a hill about a league from the hamlet, disappeared in an unaccountable manner, and neither of them seen or heard of after. They were traced to within a mile of the Witches’ Pass, where all further clue to them was lost. The strange noises which were heard about, and the shadows, which, it was stated, were seen occasionally to flit across the bridge, were thought to have relation to that mysterious transaction. These tales, which were

often mentioned in my presence, made so deep an impression upon my youthful mind, that I was frightened out of my wits at the notion of being by myself in a place, about which so many horrible things were, very generally, current; however, I was obliged to submit to my father's will, and remain at home,

“The day had been unusually sultry, and the sun had gone down in unclouded majesty. A white cloud streamed in streaks in the last gleam of sunshine—an appearance generally considered as indicative of an approaching tempest. A small dark speck, no larger than a shield, then rose in the wind's eye, expanded to the view; and, at length, having increased to a large cloud—onward it came, borne on the wind with inconceivable rapidity, casting, in its way, a shadow of darkness over the earth, and completely overspreading the heavens. No moon nor star was to be seen to break the dismal gloom which mantled the land. By this time the wind was only heard in sudden gusts and squalls, but it soon increased to a frightful hurricane, accompanied by the fall of rain in

torrents. The lightning began to flash in gashes vividly upon the gloom, and then as vividly vanished into it. The birds of prey, and the owls—ill-omened birds—disturbed from their roostings by the storm, rushed heedlessly into the darkness; and the frightful screechings of the birds, and the hoo-hoo-oo of the owls, as they fell dead with fear about the cottage door, added no little to the horrors of the scene.

“ I retired into the hamlet; barricaded the door; closed the lattice windows; fastened the shutters; made a large fire, and sat myself before it, intending soon to retire to our pallet of straw and dried leaves, having a superstitious dread over my mind which increased with every fresh blast, that whistled loudly, and for a long continuance, through the crevices of the door and windows. The clouds were surcharged with electric fluid, which flashed into temporary existence, accompanied with peals of thunder, occasionally bursting abruptly with a degree of violence that seemed to threaten general de-

struction. Now and again the lightning penetrated the hamlet in a body, and so vividly that it completely eclipsed the light of the fire. The flashes, at times, danced and lingered for some moments about the different objects in the room, and then suddenly vanished, leaving my eyes so dazzled with the brilliant, but transitory light, that all appeared, for some short time after, enveloped in darkness, notwithstanding the bright flame of the fire.

“ On a sudden there was a slight interval of calm. And now the thunder came rolling on the wind, peal over peal, each louder than the former, struggling for vent, till, at length, bursting through all impediment, it exploded in one tremendous and stunning crash, which seemed sufficient to rend the heavens and the earth, and involve all in a state of one common ruin and devastation. All the while, the storm raged, and the wind howled with ungovernable fury. At this moment the fastenings of the door and the window by its side, gave way, and both flew wide open, the

shutter of the window falling upon the stone floor with a violence that shivered it to pieces. I sunk to the earth in the most dreadful alarm, almost dead with fright; I hid my face with fear, cried out for mercy, and called upon my absent father for help.

CHAPTER II.

" I say Bonardo, murther will out.—Hush.—
 The clock is tolling, ghostly, the midnight hour,
 From the castle ward. 'Tis the time,
 When restless spirits, from their earthly bed,
 Stalk forth, and tell of deeds of blood,
 Yet unknown, and unrevenged ;
 The murther'd, and the murtherers, alike unfold,
 The secrets of the grave unhallowed reached,
 To gain quiet for their troubled shades."

Old Play.

" In the most high and palmy state of Rome ;
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The grave stood tenantless, and the sheeted dead
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets ;
 Stars shone with trains of fire, dews of blood fell,
 Disasters veil'd the sun, and the moist star,
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse."

Shakspeare.

" Haply you shall not see me more, or if—
 A mangled shadow.—"

Shakspeare.

" THE elementary war, which had raged so
 furiously, then subsided into a settled calm,
 having it would appear, exhausted its ma-

terials of strife in the last most terrific and appalling effort, which threatened to crumble the earth, and all thereon it, into atoms. Never does soaring man, or his works appear so little in his own estimation, as during the prevalence of a mighty storm, which seems bridled, even in its greatest power and strength, by some invisible hand, from spreading universal waste. The wind now was only heard in low and distant murmurings; and, ever and anon, I thought I heard voices near the hamlet door. I hastily arose from my prostrate position, a little revived by the hopes that my father had, by some good chance, returned home. I looked out,—but, instead of my father, I saw two figures standing near the verge of the abyss, overlooking the Witches' Pass, and, apparently, in deep converse. The full moon had now began to shed a light faintly through the clouds which were gradually dissolving away, and it afforded me a distinct view of their persons, whose supernatural appearance rivetted me to the spot in speechless horror.

“ One appeared to have on a hat crowned with white feathers, and his figure and visage were shrouded in a mantle or cloak. The other appeared clad as a soldier in half armour, of helmet or cap, and cuirasse, both of polished iron; and a bow and quiver of arrows were slung over his back. Notwithstanding these distinct characteristics, they seemed to be figures as unsubstantial as the shadows of men reflected by the sun upon a smooth and silvery stream; and I fancied I saw the passing clouds dimly through their form, while the outlines of their persons, dress and appearance, were clearly defined upon the air. Their voices sounded upon the ear hollow and faint like unto a mountain echo. I had no power of motion, and I listened with breathless attention to their conversation.

What passed, it would seem, had reference to a period more remote than that then present; and the main particulars of a tale of blood were thus imparted to the armourer, who, as he stated, had often witnessed parts

of the same tragedy, but never so perfectly and throughout as on the first occasion of which he was now speaking.

““ By the chance of first birth,” ‘ commenced the figure in the cloak, in a voice so strange and unnatural that the blood ran cold to my heart ;’ “ he has stood in the way between me and honors, fame and riches. And what is more, he loved where I loved, gained the dear and lovely object of my adoration, and blighted all my hopes of happiness. The hour—the bitter curses of the foul fiend light upon it—the hour that wedded them, wedded me to sorrow and revenge. I have ever since resolved his death. He had perished ere the lady had thrown off her bridal dress to his caresses, but by an unlucky chance, I failed in my purpose. A hundred times since, I have been foiled in my design. Once, when we were walking together on the borders of yon forest, my own good sword would have done the deed, but when it was half drawn from the scabbard for the purpose, the Lady Rosamond ap-

proached, and my arm fell powerless by my side. I shall know no peace till he dies; and this night, I trust, my kind and good friend, will seal his fate, and complete my happiness. The second will then be first; and your fortune is made.—Twilight has passed these two hours; he tarries on the way, or he has gone home by another path, avoiding the Witches' Pass.—Curse on my fortune, I believe, I am always to be thwarted."

" "Sir Knight," 'said the figure in half armour,' "you are too impetuous and impatient:—he always returns by the bridge from his excursions to the chase in the forest. I watched him pass over this morning with his son, whose youthful limbs, no doubt, are wearied by the sport, which most probably is the cause of the delay in their return."

"His son, then, is with him," 'said the figure in the cloak, musing,' "would that both could be disposed of together, for my purpose would be but half accomplished if the urchin be left behind. Will you—see, see,—they come :—they are now wind-

ing round the crag's point:—they are now upon the bridge.”

“ I looked towards the bridge. The moon, at the instant, though unclouded, cast a faint and sickly light upon it, and I saw advancing two figures as shadowy as the others—one of maturity, and the other youthful, but both were of a most gentle and noble mien.

“ The elder figure appeared dressed in loose buff boots, which reached the calves of the legs; light silk pantaloons, tight up to the knee, with bows of white sattin on each outer side, and full and loose upwards from the knee, where they were inlet with pieces of pink silk, and gold lace; a coat of Lincoln green, fastened to the waist by a gold band and buckle; a fine white linen ruffle round the neck; a black hat with a plume of white feathers,—the crown of the hat was bound round by a cord, from which depended two long tassels of gold,—on the head; beneath the hat, ringlets of auburn hair, fell down to the shoulders shading a countenance of manly beauty; a bow and quiver loosely hung over

the left shoulder; in the right hand was a hunting spear mounted in gold; and suspended by his side was a hunting horn, the exact counterpart of that found by my father at the bottom of the chasm. The youthful figure appeared dressed suitably to his years, and his dress was also of Lincoln green. Scarce nine springs of the stream of time appeared to have marked their growing influence upon the brow of the youth, where nobility and beauty had set their inspiring and ever estimable characters. Though their dress and appointments were so apparent, still they seemed, as the other two figures on the brink, like light shadowy bodies upon the dark air, through which distant objects could be seen, but, as imperfectly, as through a grey mist of the valley, on the rise or decline of an autumnal sun.

“The torrent’s roar was now only heard at silent intervals, and all was profoundly hushed during the conversation that passed between them; every word of which made a lasting impression upon my memory.”

“Well, Fabian, we have reached the Pass at last,” ‘said the elder figure in Lincoln green,’ “and we shall now soon arrive home.”

“Oh! Sir, I am so tired,” ‘said the youthful figure, in a plaintive voice, the melody of which now sounds upon my ear.’

“There—there is your victim, and see that your arrow takes a sure direction,” ‘said the figure in the cloak, who, with its companion, was still standing near the hamlet.’

“Not one inch from the bow shall it fly, Sir Knight,” ‘said the figure in half armour,’ “till I have in hand the reward you promised me!”

“Knave!” ‘exclaimed the figure in the cloak, in an under tone,’ “here then is a purse of fifty pieces; fifty more awaits a strong arm; and a sure aim.”

“I thought I heard distinctly the jingling of pieces of money.”

“Softly, or we shall be overheard,” ‘continued the figure in the cloak.’

“The noise of the falling waters,” ‘said the figure in half armour,’ “effectually drowns the

sound of our voices, which, therefore, cannot reach the bridge."

' "Why not?" 'replied the figure in the cloak,' "why should they not hear us, as well as we hear them?—Listen—they are now speaking."

' "What a lovely night, my dear father," 'said the youthful figure in Lincoln green,' "let us stay awhile and contemplate the beautiful scene which presents itself from this spot."

' "Your dear mother, the gentle Rosamond, will be alarmed at our absence," 'answered the elder figure,' "she expected us home before night-fall; and it is already the second watch of the night. Besides, I also begin to feel fatigued; we have been out since noon, and our sport has been rough, wearisome and unsuccessful. Come! let us away, my son, and at a more convenient time we will revisit the bridge."

' "Nay, dear Sir," 'cried the youthful figure, looking up beseechingly in the face of his sire,' "we will tarry here but a little while. You instructed me to view a moon and star-light scene with feelings of admiration and

delight, and a finer night than this I never saw. I have often wished to behold from the Pass the surrounding landscape by moonlight, when the moon should be at full, as it is now, unclouded, and, casting a general light upon the scenery around, throwing some objects into shade, and bringing out others arrayed in her melancholy light."

"Well then, my dear child," 'rejoined the elder figure,' "feast your senses upon so glorious a prospect as there is before you, both below and above, I will join you in admiration of it. It will help, perhaps, to divert my mind, and dissipate the sadness which hangs heavily upon my spirits. In beholding the great works of the Almighty, the mind expands, and exalts itself with the grandeur of the subject, and is soon lost in wonder and delight. Lift up your eyes and thoughts, my dear, from this finite world, beautiful though it be, to the bright heavens—the infinite world; there is the grand book of nature,—the great Bible of the creation—not the work of men's hands, and bound in calf, but the work

of a Master hand, and bound in infinity of space, bearing internal evidence of divine origin, unimbued with the low, grovelling, cruel, and vicious passions which characterize the works of mankind. Therein—in his wonderful creations—has the great Deity revealed himself in incontrovertible, intelligible, and imperishable characters—characters which will endure to the end of time, if it be possible to believe that time is not more indefinite and endless than space, however immeasurable space may be. In the expanse of the heavens—in that wide page, you can read the wisdom, magnitude, grandeur, power and goodness of the Creator, which are beyond all comparison, competition, or imitation. In vain does the aspiring imagination of man seek to describe the great and all powerful God—that inconceivable Being whose might controls, extends all over, and beyond the universe—the system of which is incomparably beautiful, uniform and grand. O, when I think of these things my nature melts within me; I feel real religion in my heart; I am filled with

praises and thanksgivings; and I believe in, and worship the true God. Be guided, my dear boy, through life, in meekness of spirit, by the surpassing and ever shining attributes of the God of your father, which are in all things good, that when you die, though you die not in the bosom of a church of man's setting up, which is perishable, you may assuredly hope to die in the bosom of your God, which is imperishable."

"What, Sirrah, do you hesitate about?" 'said the figure in the cloak, in a voice, apparently, shook with emotion.'

"He stands so awkwardly, there is no well hitting him," 'replied the figure in half armour.' "Besides, Sir Knight, I like not the business we are upon. Heard you not his reflections upon the Almighty?—they make me tremble with fear; my heart sinks within me, and my resolution fails. Why should I do harm to this good genteel-man?" 'and he loosened the bow, which appeared already drawn full tight for the flight of the arrow.'

"Have you not fifty good reasons in your

pocket, and are there not fifty more to back them," 'added the figure in the cloak.' "Come—come, be of good heart, and your fortune is made, I tell you. Drink deep of this," 'seemingly to hand a flask,' "it will give you more than Roman fortitude." 'The figure of the bravo appeared to take the flask and drink of it, when it fell from his trembling hand, and rolled down the gulph.'

' "Draw your bow afresh," 'said the figure in the cloak,' "be quick, or he will again escape.—Make your aim strong, true and sure."

' "I have no power left to do it, Sir Knight,"—'replied the figure of the bravo,'—"take back your purse."

' "Cowardly villain," 'exclaimed the figure in the cloak,' "instantly raise your bow, I say, or dread my vengeance."

' "Tush, man!"—'replied the figure of the bravo' "spare your threats for those who fear them—I do not. The idle threats of that man are not to be feared, who employs another to commit a deed he has not courage to perform himself."

‘ “ Hark, father,” ‘ said the youthful figure upon the bridge,’ “ I think I heard voices near us.”

‘ “ So do I, my son,” ‘ added the elder figure, turning round and looking up the precipice towards the hamlet,’ “ some peasants or woodcutters from the neighbouring forest, I suppose, who are passing over the hill on their way homewards, like ourselves, after the toils of the day.”

‘ “ We are observed,” ‘ said the figure in the cloak with apparent trepidation,’ “ quick—quick—up with your bow, I say—now then is your time,—be firm—he presents a full front to your mark—let your aim be strong and sure, now—now.—By St. Dominick, a dart, directed with a truer eye, ne’er pierced the hide of a deer—He’s hit—he’s hit—look, he staggers—he leans against the railing—hush—he speaks—he is not killed, and we are undone. Haste—take this dagger; fly to the Pass, and complete the work you have so well begun. First seal the father’s fate, cast him into the torrent beneath, and then hurl

the stripling after him. Away, away ; there must be no witness of this dark hour, left living,—but ourselves.”

“ Whilst uttering these words, the figure drew from under his cloak a dagger of the same shape and make, and with holes up the blade precisely similar to the one hanging up in the hamlet, which he passed into the hand of the figure of the bravo, shaking dreadfully, and in doing it, the cloak seemed to fall from before his face, disclosing features so ferocious, they can never be effaced from my memory.

“ When he had received the dagger, the figure of the bravo hastily moved off down the steep winding path of the Black Mountain, leaving the figure in the cloak behind, watching the figures in Lincoln green upon the bridge with intense anxiety, and his frame seemed to tremble, in the greatest alarm, like an unsubstantial shadow upon the undulating surface of a dark stream.”

“ “ Dear father,” ‘ said the youthful figure,’ “ what was that strange whizzing noise that came so instantly upon the ear ?”—

“ Alas ! my dearest boy,” ‘replied the elder figure, in a voice which now appeared weaker than before,’ “ an arrow intended, no doubt, for game, by some mischance has pierced thy father’s breast, and, I fear, has slayed him. Our lingering on the Pass has been thy father’s death.—I grow faint already.”

“ Oh father, my dearest father,” ‘exclaimed the youthful figure, giving a scream of anguish that thrilled through my veins,’ “ let us hasten home ; the shaft is sticking in your breast, and the blood is flowing fast down your raiment.”

“ I shall never see home again, poor boy,” ‘said the elder figure, which appeared to pat the cheeks, and part the curly locks on the forehead of the youthful figure, while tears seemed to chase each other rapidly down his cheeks,’ “ I am weak—feeble—I shiver—my legs refuse their wonted office—O ! I shall fall.”

“ Lean on me, dear father,” ‘said the youthful figure, apparently choked with grief, and the big tears gushed from his eye-lids,’ “ I

will support you—we shall soon reach home. Shall I assist in drawing out the arrow?—Come—come, let me, dear father—let me. I will do it very softly, and you will soon be well again.”

“It will be of no use, Fabian,” ‘replied the elder figure,’ “it has reached my heart, which seems fast withering away. Hasten home to thy mother,” ‘the figure continued, in smothered and broken sentences,’ “acquaint her cautiously of the fatal and hapless stroke which widows her, and makes you fatherless. Cherish and love her tenderly—fly boy, fly—my eyes grow dizzy—all is chaos—I am giddy—the world fades before me—My dear Rosamond—My poor boy—Oh God—Rosamond—Rosamond.”—‘A deep sigh followed, which lingered for a moment, and then died upon the air, in the whisper of an echo.’

“He dies—he dies,” ‘exclaimed the figure in the cloak, in a tone of exultation,’ “his knees bend under him—he’ll fall from the bridge—the boy is grasping the dart and the arm of his father—by St. Dominick, that’s well

done, he'll perish too—he clings fast by the shaft which lets loose the life-blood of his father, and he'll roll with him headlong down the brink—see, they are falling together—Ah ah, ah; where, now, are all thy rights and advantages of first birth?—may the torrent foam smoothly over them, for they should repose in peace: Ah, ah, ah.” ‘The sepulchral—fiend-like tone of the voice curdled the blood in my veins.’

“ At the moment the figure in Lincoln green appeared falling lifeless from the Witches’ Pass, and the affectionate heart-broken figure of the youth clinging fast to the elder’s arm with one hand, and to the arrow with the other, was on the point of falling too, a short sized woman,—a figure as unsubstantial as the others—apparently with long red hair loosely hanging down her shoulders and over her back, and dressed in rags of green and scarlet, rushed upon the bridge, seized the figure of the youth, when that of his parent seemed to fall from his feeble hold into the roaring torrent; and I heard a scream of bit-

ter despair as the figure of the woman, with the youth, vanished off the bridge.

“My senses were so completely engrossed by the affecting, though supernatural scene before me, that I involuntarily exclaimed, ‘He is saved—he is saved—the youth is saved, but I was much surprised, that the figure in the cloak, which stood near me, remained wholly unmoved by my exclamation.

“An instant after they had disappeared, the figure of the assassin came upon the bridge, apparently in pursuit of them.”

“‘The wild hag of the glen,’ ‘exclaimed the figure in the cloak, in a loud hollow voice, addressing his murderous minion on the bridge ;’ ‘has saved the stripling ; follow, and kill them both. I will descend the mountain on the other side, and stop their flight that way. Away—away—may lightning blast and wither the old hell-dame for daring to step in between me and the full completion of my hopes.’”

“With this horrid imprecation, the figure

in the cloak moved away out of sight, passing close by me. I stood motionless, petrified with horror by all I had witnessed. I had not remained long in this state of inanity, ere the figure of the assassin rushed into the hamlet, making a low noise as it passed like the distant rustling of leaves. After a short interval of time, it re-issued from the hamlet, seemingly half-undressed, with the dagger in hand, and in a disturbed but conscious sleep; trembling, and the big drops of perspiration stood upon its brow. It made to the brink, crying in a tone of piercing despair?—‘Oh, horror—horror—hide me from him—save me—save me,’ and it instantly fell over the precipice. A loud appalling shriek followed, which died away in moanings of acute agony.

“I was irresistibly drawn to the edge of the brink. I then beheld the figure in Lincoln green, standing on the bridge in the attitude of leaning against the railing. His breast was now bare, and shewed a gaping wound streaming with blood; but the figure

altogether, was not so palpable as before. In an instant, I saw it as if standing on the waters beneath. It was now still more indistinct; it then faded to the appearance of gray mist; when, like a light cloud, it dissolved into air, and vanished altogether in the white foam of the torrent.

“ On looking down the side of the chasm, the murtherer’s figure seemed to fall from one projection of rock to another, till it nearly reached the bottom, where it appeared to lodge; it then presented a frightful spectacle. The head appeared smashed flat; one leg broken at the thigh, the other below the knee; the bones all bloody, protruding from the flesh, and the left side crushed in. Then, seemingly, in the last convulsions of expiring nature, it rolled off into the troubled stream below.

“ My attention was now attracted by a heavy groan, that appeared to come from near the hamlet door. I looked round and beheld a figure armed cap-a-pee, but the helmet and

head were both cleft in twain, and the dark locks hung down stiff with gore. It was the figure in the cloak, now, apparently, dressed as a warrior, but it was not quite so distinct as when in the cloak. I saw it but for an instant, when it appeared to sink into the earth."

Whether this unaccountable and extraordinary narrative of the good keeper of the castle arms, had its origin in a dream, or was the offspring of a feverish imagination, and related so often as to appear to the narrator to be a relation of what had really been witnessed; or whether full faith is to be put in the veracity of the armourer, who asserted he had actually seen and heard all these things—and there are some concurring circumstances in the progress of the story, which support him in the assertion—we will not pretend to say; but this we will venture to affirm that there are many still more wonderful and extraordinary appearances upon record which are fully relied in.

"Seeing is believing," retorted the ar-

The Ladye of the Rose. 79

mourer to Huberto, who hinted a doubt upon the matter ; but so it may be as truly said that "believing is seeing." Belief is closely allied to sight, and it is not difficult to imagine you see a thing you believe in.

CHAPTER III.

"Live you, or are you aught
That man may question?"

Shakspeare.

"Smile on, my pretty baby boy :
That dimple chubby smile,
Will, o'er those ruddy lips of joy,
Paternal hearts beguile."

Old Song.

THE armourer had scarcely concluded his story, and there had been no time for any comments to pass when cries of distress were heard along the passage leading to the house-keeper's room, which threw the whole of the party there assembled, into an agony of fear. Their minds had been worked up to a great pitch of excitement, by the armourer's horrific tale, to which they listened with the most profound attention, not venturing to

break the awful silence they maintained throughout, beyond occasional exclamations of astonishment, elicited by different prominent and terrifying passages with which it abounded.

Cries of "Murder—help—help," were now distinctly heard approaching the door, which was then thrown open with violence, when in rushed, or rather in rolled Agatha, the under-housekeeper, pale with fright, and her teeth chattering. She sunk down on the floor near to the table, which she overset with what was upon it. The lamp was put out in the fall, and the goblets were smashed to pieces. The whole economy of the room was thrown into the greatest disorder. The women screamed, some fainted; and the men who had swords drew them, and placed themselves in an attitude of defence, against they knew not what.

The steps of Agatha, had been quickly followed by the wild woman, who was now seen standing in the centre of the room, quite undismayed by the threatening aspect of affairs around her. Her appearance at any time

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was calculated to inspire fear, but when that sentiment had already full possession of four-fifths of those present—not excepting that proportion of the warriors—the sight of her at this moment, was observed by most with awe and trembling. She stood erect, resting her right hand upon a tall thick knotty stick, which could be converted from an assistant on a journey to a weapon of offence or defence, as occasions might require, of fearful power. Her left arm was covered by a short cloak of red cloth, patched in many places, which was tied in front in a knot, and the end brought forward and thrown loosely over the right shoulder. There was no other complete garment in the whole of her dress, which was made up of pieces of raiment consisting of woollen, linen, cotton, and stuff of different colours—blue, black, white, yellow, red, and green—which chance had thrown in her way; all of which she had put together, without regard to any thing, but to form an adequate covering for her athletic and muscular form. This outward many-coloured

garment, or, more properly speaking, this party-coloured wrapper was fastened round the waist by a band of white goat-skin in its natural state, and supported over the shoulders by pieces of the same, leaving the arms, which were weather-beaten, and strongly sinewed, quite bare. The dress was uneven at the bottom, and appeared tumbling into slits and rags from age and various casualties. It reached down to the calves of the legs, which with the feet, were naked as the arms. Her face was remarkably large; her chin was long and narrow; her mouth, the lips of which were very thick and pouting, was a little awry; her nose was long, broad, and aquiline; her eyes were large and deep in the sockets, with their lids fringed with long black lashes, beneath a projecting brow with deep furrows; the hairs of the eye-brow were black, long, and thick, and met over the nose, forming two high shaggy arches, which, when knit in anger, gave a fierce and demoniacal expression to the wild roll of her eye, the white of which was as clear as unsunned snow, while the pupil

was black as jet. Her complexion was swarthy, and a profusion of black shaggy hair descended over her shoulders and down her back. These various and peculiar lineaments of her visage, gave a combined expression of deep thought, an unyielding determination of purpose, a fearlessness of danger, and an experience in it; and a quick and restless mind. And, however her countenance, generally, was stern, forbidding and ill-favored, and could be easily worked up to an expression of the highest degree of ferocity, still it was susceptible of wearing a milder character, and at times was arrayed in a smile, that had a shade of melancholy in it which disarmed all fear, and awakened a strange and powerful interest, mingled with the liveliest sympathy.

The lamp had been extinguished, it has been stated, by the fall of the table, occasioned by the terror-struck Agatha rolling against it, but the bright red flames of the fire shed a strong light upon the objects around; and particularly upon the mysterious intruder who stood in face of the fire, and appeared

illuminated by it. She struck her beholders at first sight as a supernatural being, and one of evil, and to be dreaded. The wild and vivid roving of her piercing eye from one person to another, till she had scanned them all well, withheld those whose first impulse was to do her violence, from carrying their intentions into effect. The glance was one of a moment; and before any of them could recover from the panic into which all, more or less, were thrown by her sudden and extraordinary presence, the fierce freezing look of defiance with which she had made her observations of the assembly, passed away, and melted into a faint propitiating smile of harmless intent.

“Put up your swords, good men and true,” she then said, addressing those who had drawn them on her entrance, but who now seemed more disposed to reserve them for defence in case of attack, than use them in wanton offence, the design for which they were unsheathed; “put up your swords, I say, and spare them for a fitter occasion. What have you to fear? Would ye draw

steel against a lone friendless wanderer, and a woman too, who seeks shelter from the pitiless storm which now rages without so furiously?—I am weary, and faint with hunger and thirst. I fain would have a little food and drink, and rest for the night, which I claim at the hands of the good Lord Godolphin in the names of our ‘Lady of the Fountain,’ and of ‘St. Thomas à Becket,’ and so will it fare with ye now and hereafter.”

On finishing this appeal to their benevolence and humanity, she devoutly crossed herself, and muttered a few words in prayer which were wholly unintelligible. The swords were now speedily restored to their scabbards, and by some with feelings of deep shame for having drawn them on so inglorious an occasion, and then one and all followed the wild woman’s example of crossing herself; when, in the performance of this act of devotion, their apprehensions began to subside, feelings of a kindlier nature gained the ascendancy, under the influence of which two

or three ventured to approach near to her, and offered their chairs for her to be seated. The lamp was then re-lit ; and confidence and good-will reassumed their influence over the household, who, with the terrified Agatha, now with great composure seated themselves again round the fire.

“ Gee the poor woman some cloths to dry hur with,” said the old housekeeper, addressing Beatrice, “ and let hur coome nearer the fur.”

“ Bring her some dry clothes to put on, poor soul !” said the armourer, “ she is soaked as if she had been soused over head and heels in a marl-pit*. In the meanwhile I will warm her a cup of sack, and some of ye reach her a platter, and a venison pasty to break her fast with.”

* Pits of this kind still remain very numerous in many parts of England, particularly in the West. Tradition traces them back to the time of the Saxons, who used to dig pits in the centre of fields for marl, with which to manure the land. I think the object in digging these pits, originally, was twofold,—for manure, and also for draining off the land. Some of these pits are about fifty or sixty feet deep, eighty or ninety feet long, and twenty wide, and at times are half full of water.

“Thank ye for me, good people, and may ye reap as ye sow,” said the wild woman. “The hungry must feed—the thirsty must drink—and the weary have rest—but little of either falls to the lot of poor Peg of the Dell, and but little does she require, so trouble not yeselves so much for me. The dews of night—the mists of the valley and mountain—the winter snows—the stony hail—or the pelting rain are alike the same to me;—they hurt me not.” She then rose up, gave her little cloak and her garment a shake, and moved her head from side to side, when the rain, which had settled upon her hair and dress, and had been dripping thickly and in large drops from her, was cast off, “like dew-drops from the lion’s mane,” and in an instant, all was dry about her.

At the sight of this, which was considered in a light scarcely less than a miracle, they all stared with widened eyes and gaping mouths in wonder and amazement.

“Well, well, hur wull no refuse the cheer the armourer offers her,” said the good old

housekeeper, who with all the rest now felt extremely solicitous to place before Peg of the Dell whatever the larder or the cellar afforded.

The wild woman, in announcing her name as "Peg of the Dell," elicited that good will and courtesy which her dress and look, and being a stranger to boot, were calculated to suppress. None of them had ever before seen "Black Peg" of the Dell, as she was generally called, by reason of her black hair and eyes, but her renown was familiar to most of them, as it was as well throughout the country. Many were the good and bold deeds she had performed;—many were the wonderful cures she had effected of the sick and ailing;—many were the waylaid travellers she had rescued from the clutches of the marauders who swarmed all about, and whose crimes (many blood-stained) perpetrated generally with perfect impunity, had plunged many families into sorrow and mourning, while many of the marauders themselves had been made bite the dust by the sure and ponderous flourish

of Black Peg's "white-heart," as she denominated her walking companion, which was made of the wood of a white-heart cherry-tree, and was the length of a quarter-staff;—and many were the wonderful things related of her, with which she had no concern, but which tended, of course, to increase the fame that distinguished her over the country as the most singular being—real or imaginary—the country about could produce. No particular harm was related of her, though her name was held in great dread by the little urchins, whose parents would threaten them, when naughty, with a visit from "Black Peg;" and the little things would run in doors and hide themselves, whenever her gaunt figure was seen approaching their dwellings. Her place of abode was known by no one, but it was generally supposed that she rested wherever chance directed her; and that she would recline under, or in the hollow of a tree, or in some cave, whichever first presented itself to her fatigue, with as much cheerfulness and satisfaction as when more

comfortably housed as she requested to be on the night in question.

A large venison pasty and a cup of warm sack, spiced, were soon placed before Peg of the Dell, who showed by the way in which she discussed the dainty fare, that though, generally, she would be content with little, yet there might be times when she could play as good a knife and fork as her betters, for now the raised crust, and the savoury contents of the dish, vanished with a speed as if she had not tasted food before for some days.

Soon after Peg had finished her hasty, but relishing and hearty repast, a parting draught for the night went round ; on partaking which, they all retired to repose. Black Peg was lodged in the Pilgrim's room, which was the furthest room in the north gallery ; and set apart for pilgrims and other strangers of an ordinary degree, where, upon a bed of loose straw, in accordance with the usual accommodation of the period, she was soon enwrapped in a profound sleep.

The dawn of a new day was just peeping in the east, when a fresh alarm was raised, which disturbed from their slumbers the whole of the inhabitants of the Castle. The cause of this arose from an extraordinary occurrence in the chamber of the Lord and Lady Godolphin, whose bell was rung violently, while the voice of the Baron, loudly calling up his people, re-echoed through the galleries, corridors, and the vaulted roof of the Castle-Keep.

The Baroness had been roused by the lusty cries of an infant boy, scarcely a week old, who she found on awaking, near to her head on her pillow, with its little hands closely compressing one of her's, while the helpless and plump-cheeked babe smiled in her face, as if beseeching protection; at least, such was the feeling created in the mind of this humane and very amiable lady, by the winning manner of the pretty innocent.

“Do any of you know of the introduction into the Castle of this helpless child?” said the Lord Godolphin sternly, addressing the

hastily assembled household, and pointing to the smiling infant in the arms of his lady, who, was kicking up its round legs, and stretching its little fat arms in apparent delight. No one could throw the slightest light upon the matter; at least, one and all pleaded total ignorance, and betrayed the greatest astonishment.

“What strangers arrived at the Castle yesterday?” asked the Baron.

“None, but Black Peg of the Dell, my Lord, who craved a shelter for the night from the pitiless storm,” replied the armourer.

“And you gave it, I suppose,” added the Baron, “where is the dame? bring her to me.”

Several went to fetch her, but they soon returned in dismay, for she was no where to be found. Every avenue of the Castle was then searched, but in vain; and the warder pleaded complete ignorance of her flight over the bridge of the Warder's Tower. No doubt was now entertained that Black Peg had brought the boy, and had secretly placed it

where it was found, during the repose of the Baron and his lady, whose sleep was generally very sound.

Parties were sent out to scour the country, but no tidings could be learnt respecting her; excepting, that at times she was to be seen in those parts; and then she was frequently absent, no one knew where, for two or three years together.

In the meantime the robe and clothes, in which the babe was folded, were closely scrutinized, in the hope that they might afford some clue to the relatives, or the origin of the little stranger. Nought, however, was found which could afford the wished for information; though, it was remarked, that the linen, of which the swaddling clothes were made, was very fine; and that a coronet with the initials "L. G." were roughly worked in the front of the bib and tucker which was under the robe, with tuftaffety of scarlet colour. On searching more minutely, on the inside, they found written in very small and rude characters, which could be scarcely deciphered :

—"Of such, is the kingdom of Heaven." And underneath, these lines :—

" This child of chance,
Perchance may be,
By sword and lance,
Of high degree."

The lines either bespoke the noble lineage of the foundling, thus thrown upon the bounty, benevolence, and protection of the good Baron and his lady ; or, they were prophetic of his future fame ; and there was nothing more calculated than this to propitiate the favour and countenance of the Baron, whose mind was deeply imbued with the chivalrous spirit of the age.

There was another feeling which operated powerfully in favour of the little stranger. The Baron and his lady had been married some years, but as yet, had had no interesting pledge of their affections, an object they had been long devoutly wishing for. They determined, therefore, with less hesitation than otherwise might have been the case, to bring up the abandoned infant as a child of their adoption. They appointed a nurse, with whom the boy

thrived surprisingly; and he daily gained ground in the affections of his adopted parents.

In two years after he became an inhabitant of the Castle, its lady, however, presented her lord with a little girl, their first and only child.

The Baron's daughter and his adopted son, in progress of time, grew up apace; and the tenderest affection for each other, grew with their growth; yet, for a long time, unwittingly to themselves, and totally unheeded and unknown to the Baron and his lady. Their life had been one of the greatest simplicity and artlessness. Their fondness for each other, hitherto, was only evinced, on the part of the youth, by the most attentive solicitude to please and oblige the young lady; and on that of the lady-maiden, by her acknowledgments of the sense she entertained of his attentions, being expressed with the most fervent tenderness. An averted look of concern and gentle alarm when Ludolph (the name which had been bestowed upon the

foundling) left the Castle to hunt the wolves in the forest, and an eye glistening with pleasure on his safe return, also, spoke the deep interest with which his movements were watched by the interesting Lady Bona de Godolphin.

CHAPTER IV.

"It is jealousy's peculiar nature
 To swell small things to great; nay, out of nought
 To conjure much; and then to lose its reason
 Amid the hideous phantoms it has form'd."

Young.

"Appeared, not of this earth, but yet
 Stood on it."

"Where should this music be? in air or earth?
 It sounds no more, and sure it waits upon
 Some god of th' island."

Shakspeare.

"A thing divine: for nothing natural
 I ever saw so noble;"

Shakspeare.

"Most sure the goddess
 On whom these airs attend."

Shakspeare.

At the time when the form of the youth was settling into the most manly estate, and the charms of the lady-maiden were ripening into the most exquisite and delicate proportions of a full grown, but slender and beautiful young woman, a strange knight, accompanied by a

large train of followers, arrived at the Castle, commissioned to induce its powerful and influential Lord, to join with his vassals in a new expedition to drive the infidels from the holy city.

Sir Canute, Baron de Bellemonte, the visitor in question, had just returned from Palestine, whither it was his intention to return, so soon as he had collected together some fresh vassals and mercenaries of his own, with whom it was his intention to join Richard, surnamed "Cœur de Lion,"—the lion-hearted King of England,—in a fresh crusade to the Holy Land. But he wanted as well, to swell the number of the English forces by all the auxiliaries possible, and with this view, he was now a visitor at Godolphin Castle.

The Baron de Bellemonte was a distinguished knight, fond of war, generous and brave, but with these high qualities he was impatient of control, unbridled in his passions, and relentless and bitter in his revenge. He was now between forty and fifty years of age;

robustly built, broad shoulders, a visage strongly marked, but heavy in expression, though indicative of a vigorous and an undaunted mind; and it was shaded by a profusion of sandy hair, which gave a still more unfavourable cast to his rough features.

The youth and loveliness of the Baron's daughter, never failed awakening a lively interest with every one; it was no wonder, therefore, that the knight-baron could not behold her surpassing beauty with indifference. From the first moment of seeing her, his heart yielded to the soft ascendancy of her various and dazzling graces, which inspired him incontinently with a love the most ungovernable, in the pursuit of which, the best parts of his character completely changed.

Under the influence of his passion, his jealous eye was the first to discover the mutual fondness of the foundling Ludolph, and the fair Lady Bona de Godolphin. Every little trifling incident, which by an indifferent eye, would have remained unnoticed, or would have been set down as a display only of

usual respect and courtesy, tended, with the knight-baron, to confirm him in his suspicions. No sooner was De Bellemonte convinced upon this head, than he availed himself of every opportunity to lessen the estimation and partiality of Lord Godolphin and his family, for the otherwise friendless Ludolph, in order to lead to his total dismissal from the Castle. Ludolph was no stranger himself to the circumstance of his appearance in the Castle, and he would often brood in secret over his dependent state, without having a human being with whom he could claim consanguinity. Ludolph had a fund of affection in his nature, which impelled him to view the happy state of those who could claim kindred, however humble, or however exalted,—not with envy, but with heartfelt regret at his own forlorn condition: a child of fortune—of mystery—nameless—excepting bearing a name, voluntarily bestowed, by which to distinguish him from among the common herd. Yet, with the knowledge of these facts to work upon, the knight-baron did not succeed

so rapidly in his base purpose as he contemplated, though he felt well pleased at seeing that he had made some unfavourable impression upon the mind of the unsuspecting Baron, his protector. He determined, therefore, to accomplish his death, as the only means of ridding himself at once of an object who, he discerned, would prove an insurmountable obstacle in the way of his addresses being favourably received by the Lady Bona. He did not anticipate much, or any difficulty with her parents, with whom, he well considered, a deserted child could not be preferred to a renowned knight and a baron, the owner of two castles, of fifteen hundred vassals, and in high favor with his king; though, at the same time, he felt assured from their great kindness, and the invariable deference they paid to their beloved daughter's wishes, that they would not constrain her affections in a matter, which concerned so intimately her happiness for life. He had noticed with dismay, that the young lady avoided his fiery glance with fear and trembling, and with evident aversion;

but this feeling of dislike he hoped to conquer, with the assistance of her parents, when the youth was disposed of, and he had offered himself in due form. Ludolph out of the way, De Bellemonte thought the interesting Lady Bona then could not long resist his various and commanding pretensions. Having resolved the youth's death, the knight-baron lost no time in devising the means to bring it about, without exciting any suspicion that he had any concern in compassing it.

The neighbouring forest was overrun with wolves, to whom young Ludolph had proved a mortal foe. His principal exercise and amusement, from an early age, was to enter the thickest part of the forest alone, armed with a sword and spear, and when he met one, two, or even three wolves together, he would fearlessly attack them, and generally succeeded in destroying them. When the wolves prowled in large bodies, however, he would mount a tree to avoid them; there he would rest securely till they had passed off, in doing which,

some of them, as they espied him, would grin their teeth, and howl terrifically in recognition of their adventurous and bold destroyer. Ludolph's numerous encounters and narrow escapes with the wolves, were often the theme of praise and astonishment throughout the Castle.

Sir Canute considered from these facts, that a plan might be laid by which the wolves could be made an instrument of to destroy the brave youth, in one of his hazardous excursions, so that no suspicion could arise of any design or foul play against him.

One day Ludolph had, as usual, proceeded to the forest; and Lady Bona had retired to her apartment. It was an hour past noon. She seated herself at the open casement, beneath which a terrace ran round the angle of the Castle-keep, in which her chamber was situated, in an undefinable mood of melancholy, which is frequently the foreboding of evil. She had not been long there ere she heard voices ascending from the terrace. Cu-

riosity formed no part of her character, yet an irresistible impulse now induced her to apply a listening ear. She then clearly distinguished the voice of De Bellemonte. The first part of what passed, she had wholly lost, but she still overheard sufficient to plunge her into considerable alarm, though the precise cause for which she could not exactly define.

—— “And you found the wolves, as I told you you would at that hour in the morning, all retired to their haunts and holes,” said the knight-baron in an under tone, which were the first words that reached the Lady Bona distinctly.

“We met a few straggling here and there, but we soon scared them away,” replied a voice, which she recognized as that of De Bellemonte’s most confidential esquire.

“How many men had you for the purpose?” said the knight-baron.

“Three, Sir,” rejoined the esquire.

“Did you enjoin them to strict secrecy,” said the knight-baron.”

"I selected the most tried and faithful of your retainers," replied the esquire.

"And you are quite sure that they spread themselves in the heart of the forest, so as to take a wide range?" said the knight-baron.

"We took a range of two miles, in the depth of the forest, half a mile apart from each other, in order to be within sound of our horns, in case any wolves came upon either of us, of which there was much danger; and then we drew on in so direct a line towards the outlet between the twin-oaks, that we all met at that point at the same moment," said the esquire.

"And you made among you, in your way, good use of the composition I prepared and gave you?" said the knight-baron.

"All the trees and hillocks of mould and turf, we came a near, are so effectively smeared with it, that there will not be a wolf in the whole forest unattracted by the scent, which is as strong as a stagnant pool in a broiling sun," returned the esquire.

"'Tis well done," said Sir Canute, "and now

fetch my partisan ; * I, attended by you, with your halberd, will out to the sport, which this stripling—this Ludolph—is so fond of. There will be rough work, I trow,” continued De Bellemonte, soliloquizing when his esquire had left him, “the wolves, attracted by the smell, will be out early to feed, and, allured onwards, from tree to tree, with the desire for food increasing at every step, they will meet in vast numbers near the outlet by the twin-oaks, when, repeated disappointment to their

* A partisan was a weapon of war, of fearful power in those times, and was much in use with the ancient Britons. It is a very rare and curious instrument of destruction. The few of them which remain in our days, are only to be found in different collections of arms and armour. The head is of steel, fixed to a staff, and together is about the length of a spear. The head is in the shape of a spear-head, running out about a foot from a description of battle-axe, the broad side of which is of curious form. It runs from the end near the staff convexedly for about six inches, and then slopes round into a concavity, about the same length, which terminates in a sharp projecting point towards the head, in the shape of a half moon. At the back of the centre of the main blade is a smaller point in the shape of a triangle, of about two inches, from the base to the point. From the extreme point at the back, to the edge of the main-blade in front, measures about half a foot. The flat-sides of the whole of its head, are marked with a sort of hieroglyphic characters, which in those dark ages, were thought to possess a talismanic charm, prophetic of safety and success in war.

ravenous and unusually excited appetites, will have so maddened their ferociousness beyond their savage nature, that, in good sooth, they will fall to and devour one another, in the absence of more *dainty* prey."

The Lady Bona could not assume any thing very certain from what she had overheard; but that some imminent danger threatened young Ludolph in the forest, took full possession of her mind. Under this fear she involuntarily ejaculated—"Oh! Ludolph, Ludolph, it is the outlet by which you always pass. I will instantly hie me thither, and warn thee of thy danger. Kind heaven grant I may be in time to save thee. The wolves will devour thee: oh! Ludolph, thou must be the dainty prey the villain means."

She already in imagination, saw the mangled remains of her lover, and she burst into a flood of tears. With feelings harrowed up to the highest pitch of excitement by the most frightful images passing rapidly through her sensitive mind, she placed her riding hat

hastily upon her head, and a short mantle over her shoulders, with great tremor and perturbation; when away she flew over the draw-bridge, passing, in the court yard, De Bellemonte's favorite esquire, who was bearing his master's partisan, and then she pursued her fleet course down the serpentine way leading to the plain, across which she bounded with the swiftness of a deer; nor, did she stop to take breath, till she reached within a few yards of the twin-oaks. She then rested a moment to gain the power of speech, when, scarcely knowing what else to do, she exclaimed with all the vigour she could command, in her agitated state of mind, and exhausted breath,—“Ludolph, Ludolph, Ludolph, instantly fly the forest, or ye will perish. It is thy Bona warns thee that murder lurks beneath its shades.”

Her voice was very feeble, but she had scarcely raised it, ere seven wolves rushed furiously over the brushwood, and in a few moments had closely approached the hapless lady-maiden; who, upon seeing them, re-

treated a little way with tottering steps, when calling upon Ludolph, to save her, and giving a faint scream, she sunk senseless upon the earth.

Ludolph was on his way from the forest; but, as he approached near to the outlet, he saw a most unusual number of wolves in its immediate neighbourhood, snarling and growling at each other in the greatest rage and fury. He lost no time in retreating to his customary refuge in such cases the branches of a tree,—but to his great dismay and astonishment, he observed the wolves linger and cluster about its trunk, and some of them eagerly lick it, instead of dispersing and moving off, as was always the case before.

At this alarming moment, he heard the voice of the gentle Lady Bona, calling upon him to seek his safety, and the next instant her scream, which petrified him with horror. “Oh, God! the wolves are upon her,” he exclaimed, in an agony of mind impossible to describe. With the quickness of lightning he stopped his ears with his fore-fingers, and

then imitated to the life, most loudly, the wolves' signal-howl* of danger, which instantaneously drew them off from their helpless victim. Ludolph no sooner saw the success that attended his stratagem, than with the facility of a squirrel, he moved along the longest branch of the tree, from the end of which, in one desperate leap, he cleared the brushwood, and reached the open country.

Ludolph instantly saw the prostrate and senseless form of her, he knew not till that moment how much, he tenderly loved; and his heart was ready to burst its seat. The wolves beheld him; and with flashing eyes and hideous howls, they simultaneously rushed forward. Two he instantly killed, with as many lunges of his spear; but still, they were likely to prove too many for him. He suddenly, however, found his efforts aided by a woman in rags, who dealt about her such

* The beasts of the field, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea, instinctively give warning to their several species, of any supposed danger, which is implicitly obeyed. Beasts of prey have often been known to be called off their food by it, even when most ravenously hungry.

lusty blows, with a thick knotty stick, that three out of the remaining five in a moment lay sprawling, with broken legs, at which she only aimed, and howling dismally from pain. There would have been no difficulty in destroying the other two, but Ludolph's wolf-cry, which drew off the wolves from the Lady Bona, also attracted to the spot the body of wolves which had been prowling near the outlet, and they now poured forth from the forest in vast and overwhelming numbers. All was given up for lost, though De Belle-monte, induced by the imminent peril which threatened the Lady Bona, had come upon the field of contention with his esquire, and had killed and disabled a great many.

The esquire who had some of his master's composition still remaining in his pocket, and who scented strongly of it, was the first victim that fell a sacrifice to their fury. He was all at once attacked by the whole body of wolves, and instantly torn to pieces.

While this effective, but horrifying diversion was unexpectedly made in their favor,

Ludolph, De Bellemonte, and the wild woman availed themselves of the short respite thus afforded them, to surround the still inanimate Lady Bona, in order to defend her to the last, or perish in the attempt, before the wolves should harm her. In the twinkle of a star, not a vestige of the poor esquire, who had fallen an unconscious victim to his master's wicked and diabolical designs, remained—and "what was he among so many?"—when the wolves again turned upon their foes with unassuaged appetites, and unabated ferocity.

The courage of the small party continued unimpaired, but their strength had wasted away by their extraordinary efforts and exertions. At length the youth Ludolph sunk upon his knees, by the side of the lifeless Lady Bona, completely exhausted; De Bellemonte was pinned to the ground by one of the foremost and largest wolves, which had seized him behind at the bend of his right leg, but the knight-baron still continued to dart about him many deadly thrusts with his partisan;

and the wild woman, who had exhibited almost supernatural strength and courage, and had strewed the ground with the wounded and disabled by the tremendous whirl of her staff, but which was now raised with an enfeebled arm, to fell the next that approached, was in total despair, while the wolves at this critical and defenceless moment were rushing towards them from every direction. Many were already upon their hind legs in the act of making a final leap upon their tired, and now disheartened prey, when they were rendered harmless by the most heavenly and entrancing strains suddenly swelling upon the air. The wolves were affected by the exquisite harmony in the most extraordinary way. Some of them rolled over and over upon the ground; others howled hideously with pleasure, while many panted with gaping mouths, and their tongues hung out like so many delighted dogs. "Music hath charms to soothe the savage breast," and, thus influenced, their eye lost its fiery expression; they lashed their sides with their tails; their

savage nature was completely subdued, when, howling most piteously, they slowly crouched back some distance from their intended victims.

Ludolph and his companions were quite entranced and spell-bound; and, for a few moments, were lost to all perception. The sun, which before was obscured, was now shining with more than usual refulgence.

In a mellow and bewitching voice, and in the softest notes of recitative, which were more refreshing and reviving to the drooping soul than a summer's breeze, was expressed,—

“ A spirit of the vasty air,
’Fore winds, I’ve sped, to save the pair.”

and then followed a continuation of the enchanting sounds which first captivated their senses.

Ludolph looked up to see from whence the voice of angel-melody could come, when, he beheld, a few paces before him, the loveliest, and the most exquisite and surpassing being that ever presented itself to mortal eye. The

beauteous creature was in the form of a lady of tender years, of the most delicate and excelling symmetry of shape, with charms and graces of heavenly rarity; and having a transcendent countenance, ever smiling and beaming happiness and peace. She appeared treading on the grass, the thin slender blades of which but slightly bent beneath the light step of her airy feet. Her golden tresses were confined over her polished brow of adamantal whiteness, by a wreath of violets and snow-drops, intermingled with the young leaves of the laurel tree, and a moss-rose, out-spreading into beauty, was in the centre of the wreath, which was so arranged that the young rose should appear over the left brow, peeping from amid the luxuriant and glossy curls, some of which strayed wantonly down about her fair and lovely neck. The edges of all the leaves were bespangled with small drops like dew-drops, which sparkled as the most brilliant gems. A garland composed of violets, snow-drops, and moss-roses, interspersed with an

infinite variety of smaller flowers, of the most delicate and innocent tints, and green leaves of the rarest colour, fell from the left shoulder, down the right side of a dress made of rose leaves of the richest and most glowing hue. The ridges of these rose leaves also were studded, to appearance, with large chrystallized dew-drops which had the brilliancy of diamonds of the first water. The waist was confined by a band similarly composed as the garland, with a full blown rose in the centre. Her full eye, of ethereal blue and purity, was of great lustre, expressive of the divine attributes, and melting with mildness and benevolence. Her small and pretty pouting lips had the rich hue of the carnation, while her fair dimpled cheeks, were but slightly flushed with a roseate tinge. Her hands were small and delicate, and her arms were round, tapering and beautifully formed. Her attitude was most graceful and elegant. Her left hand was a little raised up playing with and entwining one of the flowing ringlets of gold, which fell over the left temple, while the

right hand held high in the air, curving over the head, and facing the passing breeze by which it was played, an instrument of music of very wonderful construction.

The airy instrument which she held, was somewhat after the fashion of a lute, made of very fine silver strings. The frame was formed of many very small and curious instruments, and others were entwined and intermingled with the strings, but all were of different shapes, and produced different sounds; the whole, in variety and number, forming a band of instruments which breathed forth various tones of the sweetest and most bewitching description. The floating and ever-varying melody, which this instrument of instruments produced, was, at moments, most thrilling, now soft and soothing, and then most extatic and melting, according as the breeze was full or gentle in its influence.

A perfume from this lovely creature; more fragrant, sweet, and delicious than the essence of a thousand flowers, at the same time, filled the air, and combined to delight the senses.

Ludolph lost in wonder and astonishment, in a voice tremulous with the liveliest emotion of reverence and gratitude, said "sweet emanation of divinity! whence do ye come, and whither do ye go?"

In a strain soft and sublime, but wild as the airy instrument whose intoxicating melody, all the while wanted on the gale; and in the most inspired recitative, the fair spirit of the air replied;—

"Of heav'n I come, to heaven I flee:
'Mid the stars, moon, and sun,
Through the air, over land, and o'er sea,
Ne'er my race can be run."

Here a change suddenly took place in the style of the melody, which became still more wild, lively, and soft, as the beautiful being added,—

"I see no night, feel no sorrow,
Mark no time, and know no morrow."

The heavenly melody again varied as the fair spirit continued—

"Have joy without end, youth without change,
And through space, without limit, I range."

The more than magical sounds of the in-

strument now swelled rich and full with the breeze; and then died imperceptibly away in the calm which immediately followed.

The effect which the lovely music produced upon the mind of Ludolph is indescribable; it was a delightful conscious entrancement, in which the soul was so pleasingly enwrapped that it was ready to o'erleap its seat and anticipate with joy, the period of its release from its mortal abode, with its sensibilities fully alive, and prepared on the instant to glorify God. His soul melted within him in an undefinable extacy of feeling, and for the moment, seemed lifted up from its sublunary sphere of action.

The Ladye of the Rose then lowered the omnifarious instrument, and placed it over her left arm, from which it appeared suspended by a narrow band, which seemed of the nature and various colours of the rainbow. She then approached the Lady Bona, took from her robe a watery gem, and placed it on her colourless lips, the warmth of which soon liquidized it. The Lady Bona instinctively

opened her mouth, and received the precious and fragrant drop within it, which no sooner reached the tongue than it had the effect of restoring her to life and sensibility.

On the return of her senses, her first thoughts were, as her last had been, concerning Ludolph.

"The wolves, the wolves," she exclaimed, "my poor Ludolph, where are you?"

"Here sweet love, and safe," said Ludolph, recovering from his dream of bliss at the sound of the voice of his lady-love, "we are all, save one, most miraculously preserved. Open thine eyes, gentle lady, and behold our heavenly deliverer."

The beauteous spirit was gone. The sun by this time had tinged the ridge of the distant mountain with his last departing ray. Ludolph's eye rapidly glanced towards the west, on the line of earth and heaven.

The fair and lovely being, who a moment before had recovered the Lady Bona, there stood upon the horizon, amid the most dazzling brightness, glowing red with the sun's

retiring beams, and the watery gems of her robe twinkled with a paly light. Thus arrayed and illumined in the sun's splendour, she herself appeared as a sun in the form of a sylph, whose disc was studded with stars, the light and silvery appearance of which, contrasted with the golden magnificence of the face on which they rested to an effect the most lively pleasing, and imposing. Her right hand, as when first seen, held proudly the airy and omnifarious instrument, which now appeared of burnished gold, fired by the departing light of the great and magnificent orb—the unerring regulator of day and night. She was visible but for a moment, when in the bright refulgence of her charms, she moved away in the splendid train of the sun, with inconceivable rapidity, into indefinite space. The grey twilight fell soon after; and the night advanced from the east, and spread its sable folds to mantle the earth in imperfect darkness, till the pale moon rose, and silvered the gloom with her soft and gentle beams—with the shadow of day.

In the meanwhile the wild woman, unobserved, had sought the shades of the forest. The wolves still remained some distance off, lying upon the green turf together, like a flock of sheep; but a wolf-cry from the heart of the forest, similar to the one made by Ludolph, now recalled them into its darkest recesses.

The Lady Bona closely compressed an arm of Ludolph with both hers, feeling the greatest consolation and confidence in his protection; while De Bellemonte, who was very lame from the bite he had received, availed himself of the support of the other—the arm of the unsuspecting youth, whose horrid and dreadful death he had plotted in the morning, with so much cold-blooded calculation and ingenuity.

In this form they were hastening with all the speed they could command, in the disabled state of the knight-baron, who Ludolph would not leave behind, though he was under the most painful anxiety to secure the safety of the Lady Bona in the castle of her father, without a moment's delay; apprehending, as

night was approaching, the possibility of a fresh attack from the wolves, when they were met by a large party from the Castle, headed by the Lord Godolphin, who came, thus aided, in search of his beloved and affectionate daughter.

De Bellemonte was then placed upon a litter, hastily made of withes, which were fastened together with briars, and put across two thick branches of a tree. The litter was carried by four men, and then the whole party soon found themselves within the Castle gates. The knight-baron was instantly conveyed to his chamber, and had his leg examined by one of his own retainers, who was well skilled in the simple and inexpensive pharmacy of the age. The flesh was much lacerated and swollen, but an embrocation extracted from curious herbs of a cooling, oily, and allaying nature, was applied by him, and the remedy was so efficacious, that in a few days De Bellemonte had again the free use of his wounded limb.

CHAPTER V.

“ Love calls for love. Not all the pride of beauty ;
 Those eyes that tell us what the sun is made of ;
 Those lips, whose touch is to be bought with life !
 Those hills of driven snow, which seen are felt :
 All these possess are nought, but as they are
 The proof, the substance of an inward passion,
 And the rich plunder of a taken heart.”

Young. ’

DURING the confinement of De Bellemonte to his chamber, he was constantly tended by Ludolph, who felt the highest gratitude towards the knight-baron for what, he thought, his generous and noble assistance ; and the greatest concern at the death of his esquire.

The Lady Bona had had no opportunity of communicating to Ludolph her suspicions of the treachery of De Bellemonte, for the dreadful fright she had experienced, had thrown her into an alarming state of health, which wholly confined her to her room.

Ludolph, at the same time, felt the deepest

anxiety about the illness of the dear 'object of his tenderest affections, whose safety hitherto, was principally attributed to him by the Baron and his lady, for which they were unbounded in their expressions of thanks, and stated that they considered a blessing had been over their family, and castle, ever since his mysterious entrance into it.

Not a moment, however, was lost by De Bellemonte after his recovery, to push on his cowardly and diabolical schemes for the destruction of the dauntless youth. Even when leaning on his arm for support, he was exulting over the adventure, notwithstanding his own painful hurt, and the frightful death of his faithful esquire, for he saw that it was pregnant with the means, if properly used, of ultimately fully accomplishing his ends. Chance too often aids the vilest purposes, and he availed himself of the different prominent incidents attending the encounter with the wolves, and their miraculous escape from them, to compass, successfully, the total undoing of Ludolph.

The period was very superstitious, and full faith was placed in witchcraft, charged with which, hundreds—nay, thousands have been burnt at the stake, before, at, and since that period; to which they were too often brought by pharisaical fanatics, whose own artful acts and practices, nearer approached witchery, than any thing their innocent and hapless victims could possibly be charged with. The age was so barbarous, that to suspect a person of witchcraft, was alone sufficient to raise a thousand voices, calling loudly to have the suspected party put to death.

The Lord Godolphin's weakest point was in the belief of witchcraft, on which failing, De Bellemonte most cunningly, and successfully worked. He sought an early private interview with the Baron, with whom he was closeted for some time. He first alarmed the family pride of the Baron, by stating that Ludolph had enticed the Lady Bona to the forest with some sinister design. "I overheard him," said he, "constrain the Lady Bona to meet him. Fearing some harm might happen to

the lady-maiden, I was induced to follow. I luckily came up in time to save your daughter from a host of ravenous wolves. The imminent peril of the young lady can be gathered from the fact that my poor and faithful esquire perished in her defence, and I was, also, nearly falling a victim; though a thousand such lives as my esquire's, or my own, I value not, compared to the preservation of the dear daughter of my good friend, the Lord Godolphin;" and here he seized the Baron's hand and warmly pressed it within his own.

"Oh! Sir Canute, how can I sufficiently express or return the obligations we owe you?" said the Baron, "you have thrown some light upon a matter, about which, we have been most grossly deceived. Our daughter's safety, we have been induced to place mainly to the account of young Ludolph—a foundling whom we have brought up and cherished, when it would appear that he was the sole cause of the perilous danger to which our beloved daughter was exposed; and of the illness which now afflicts her."

"It is too true," rejoined De Bellemonte, "and what is more—I have good reason to think that he, an outcast—a spurious offspring of some mendicant, no doubt—has, by the most wily arts and practices, succeeded in gaining the affections of the only child of one of the most noble houses in Britain."

De Bellemonte here paused to observe the effect which his announcement might have upon the Baron; and he could scarcely restrain his feelings, as he remarked his eye look fierce, and a hectic pass over his countenance, while he added, much agitated,—
"Give me but proof of this, Sir Knight-Baron, and the ingrate who seeks to make so ill a return for our favour and protection, as to dishonour our name, shall be confined in the deepest dungeon of the Castle, where in chains he shall for ever rue his presumption."

"What stronger proof would ye have, my dear Baron," said De Bellemonte, "than that he allured your daughter to the forest, where she was on the point of perishing. Besides,

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I have repeatedly seen them together, and have heard them address each other by the most endearing appellations — appellations, none but lovers use in their interchange of vows."

"Inform me more, or unsay this," said the Baron, with increased emotion. "Alas! that all these years we should have nurtured a serpent, who in return for our goodness, stings us in the most vital part, and robs us of our greatest treasure—the hope, the joy, the blessing of our lives now, and the prospect of happiness in our old age."

"He must be in league with witches, and have raised a spell over the mind of your daughter, Baron," added De Bellemonte. "That he has dealings in witchcraft and with witches, there can be no doubt. He came from among hundreds of wolves unhurt, and was quickly followed by a wild beldame, who laid about her with supernatural power. It could be nothing else, than the effects of their wicked arts united, which made all the wolves fall upon my poor esquire, and in-

stantly devour him. They caused, also, one to seize upon me, but the youth Ludolph, whose power, strength, and ability to resist are not to be compared to mine, is without a scratch. Besides, I heard him hold communion with one of the infernal tribe, at the sound of whose voice, the wolves on the instant became as harmless as lambs, and retreated back into the forest, which could only be the effect of some supernatural agency. On my knighthood I think he is leagued with witches, and is well practised in witchcraft and sorcery."

"The facts astound me," said the Baron, much moved, "they call loudly for investigation, and they shall have it. To-morrow at noon we will enter upon the solemn enquiry: the youth shall not be condemned unheard; but if he cannot explain away, satisfactorily, the mysterious circumstances which appear so strong against him, full and ample justice shall be done on him.

De Bellemonte had purposely suppressed the two lines in which the *Ladye of the*

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Rose announced herself, as well as her intent,—

“ A spirit of the vasty air,
 'Fore winds, I've sped, to save the pair,”—

for he saw, that, if he named them, they would disprove the accusation altogether, and prove, on the contrary, that if witchcraft had had any thing whatever to do with the occurrence, it was of a protective, and not of a wicked and destructive character, and that the safety,—not the destruction of the Lady Bona, was the object attained in its exercise.

By virtue of the right of “*Fossa and Furca*,”* held by Lord Godolphin, in common with many other puissant barons, Ludolph was put upon his trial, unknown to Lady Godolphin or her fair daughter, at the instigation of De Bellemonte, who advised, upon the plea of sparing their feelings, that the proceedings should be carried on without their knowledge,

* The feudal right of “*Fossa and Furca*” i. e. “*Pit and gallows*,” formerly was a very high privilege, or institution, held by right by most, but exercised by all of the feudal barons. It was the right of trying, condemning and executing. The murderous abuses to which such a system of law was liable, are quite obvious.

and he was condemned, though, in his defence the poor youth declared his total ignorance of the Lady-Maiden Bona venturing to the forest—an act he would have strongly urged her against, and not have encouraged—and described most artlessly the whole transaction, not concealing a single fact, whether it was calculated to militate against himself or not. The consequence was that the main facts of impeachment, as urged and proved by De Bellemonte, and one or two witnesses whom he suborned and schooled for the purpose, were literally established by his own admissions, and he was declared guilty of witchcraft, and sentenced to be burnt alive, at night fall, on the following day;—the mode of death universally adopted for that supposed offence. In the meantime he was consigned to a dismal dungeon, whose darkness was not relieved by a single ray of light, which left the hapless Ludolph in a horrible and indescribable state of mind, without the slightest hope or comfort to indulge in, which might cheer him even for a moment.

No person was allowed to see him, or bring him any food ; thus had the usual good and humane feelings of the Baron Godolphin sustained a sudden and complete revulsion, by a barbarous prejudice common to the times. There is no state of misery so great but what it can be aggravated or alleviated by even slight circumstances ; and who can paint the horrors of the mind of a condemned criminal, debarred of all light—of all food—and of all social communion with human beings, having the dreadful certainty of soon being put to a dreadful and violent death, pictured in bright and vivid colors to the imagination. The light of the mind ever shines, whether the object before it be bright felicity, or black despair. The criminal who is to die the next minute, will still derive some relief to his misery, in satisfying the cravings of hunger, but his sufferings must be infinitely more increased when his bodily wants are added to his mental agony.

The dark shades of night had fallen early upon the day, when Ludolph was dragged

from his cell, in which no person had yet been confined, who had ever left it, but to meet certain death, escorted to the stake outside the castle walls, by a party of Lord Godolphin's vassals, joined with a few of De Bellemonte's retainers.

The good Baron Godolphin, and the wicked knight-baron De Bellemonte, were seated under the spreading branches of a fine sycamore tree, to witness the cruel execution of the sentence, attended by their principal men-at-arms, while the common men formed themselves some paces off the intended victim, and completed a circle round the stake.

Ludolph was then bound to the stake; the next moment, a light was put to the faggots, which were to consume him. They were already in flames, and were sending up a smothering volume of smoke, when the most piercing screams were heard, and the cry of "Save him, O! my father, save him, save him, he is innocent."

The Lady Bona, the instant before only had been informed of the melancholy fate

which awaited Ludolph, and ill as she was, and without any extra covering, she had flown from her sick bed to implore of her father the youth's pardon. She arrived too late, for the frightful tragedy had already commenced, and at the sight of the young flames glaring upon the stake-bound youth, she fell senseless within a few paces of the blazing faggots.

Ludolph, under the influence of the suffocating flames, had drooped his head in insensibility, while the fire was communicating from stick to stick, from faggot to faggot, with great rapidity. Here some horrid yells sounded in the opposite direction, and three of the men-at-arms were laid low upon the turf, before any one could be aware of the cause of their fall. Having thus cleared the way before her, the red flames of the faggots flashed upon the wild woman, who was so bold and staunch a party in the strife with the wolves. "Peg of the Dell; Peg of the Dell," resounded from a dozen voices, when she was prevented from doing further mis-

chief, by having her uplifted arms ready to make a fresh blow, pinioned from behind, by four stout yeomen rushing upon her, and seizing them, ere the fourth flourish of her "white heart" could take its certain effect with the rest. Black Peg's intention of releasing the youth, in spite of every difficulty, was thus frustrated, and all her attempts to shake off those who held her proved abortive.

The light of day now suddenly beamed in a circle upon the frightful scene, and instead of the chills of evening, was felt the glowing warmth of day. The most lovely and celestial music then breathed upon the air, and in a voice more sweet than a cherub's, was expressed the same lines which were heard before, but in a cadence most plaintive, pathetic and affecting—

"A spirit of the vasty air,
'Fore winds, I've sped, to save the pair."

The flames of the faggots were already checked : they died away before a light which had more than the heat and glow of a noon-day

summer sun. The last thin vapour of smoke had spread itself in the air, ere the spectators of the tragedy recovered the sense of perception, which had been taken away by the instant and dazzling light, when the first object which presented itself to their recovered sight, was the *Ladye of the Rose*, standing in the same attitude as before, amid the brightest sunshine, close to the stake, and applying a fragrant drop from her robe, to the nostril of the lifeless Ludolph. The cords which bound him loosened, and he leaped, with restored life to raise from the ground the Lady Bona, whose prostration first met his quickened gaze.

His close embrace soon revived the gentle-hearted lady-maiden, who upon beholding Ludolph safe uttered a choking exclamation of surprise and joy, and her lovely head rested against his breast for awhile in a delirium of conscious and gratified stupor.

De Bellemonte closed his eyes, and his robust frame trembled with disappointment, rage, shame, and fear. The Baron and the

rest of the spectators were struck dumb and motionless at the miraculous intervention, which had saved the youth, whose threatened fate had awakened the deepest commiseration in the breasts of many, whose feelings were not too much warped by the blind and infatuated bigotry of those rude and unenlightened days.

Before any of the party had recovered their surprise and the use of their faculties, the fair spirit of light, in a wilder but with the same affecting and soul-entrancing melody, and still accompanied by her bewitching and ever-varying instrument—said :

“ The sun declines behind the hills,
My course is in his ray;
In ceaseless light I thus enjoy,
A space of endless day.”

The last word had scarcely sounded on the air, when the whole party found themselves enveloped in darkness. The magic harmony still floated upon the breeze, but only for a very short space of time.

“ To the west, to the west—look to the

west," shouted Ludolph in breathless haste. All eyes were instantly directed towards the western sky. The *Ladye of the Rose*, was passing over the brow of the highest mountain, holding the instrument, as usual, high in the air; and casting in her way, a limited and transitory shadow of light upon the earth, while a gleam of light streamed in her train, marking her inconceivably fleet course with the vividness and indurability of a meteor. Her slight form was partially veiled in a light blue transparent cloud, which was edged with a hue of burnished gold, and the crystallized watery gems upon her robe, twinkled like stars.

The eye had only just time to rest on the beauteous being—about whom the atmosphere was as bright as day, and all around that was of the darkness of night before the moon is up, ere she receded into the boundless air, leaving the full moon, which now emerged from the east, to shed her silvery beams, and penetrate, with her interesting light, the dark mantle of night.

While all were deeply impressed with wonder and admiration, Peg of the Dell effected her escape, which the Baron very much regretted, as he wanted to learn all that she could unfold relating to Ludolph, since whose strange introduction into the castle—nineteen years gone by—she had not been seen in that neighbourhood, excepting when she rendered such effective aid to Ludolph in his contest with the wolves, and then she was not recognised in time to stay her flight back into the forest.

The return of Ludolph (whose clothes were not even singed) to the castle was one of triumph; and the night afterwards was far spent in the most sincere rejoicings at his preservation, which was fairly considered as having been effected by the interposition of Providence.

At an early hour the next morning he was summoned to the presence of the Lord Godolphin. "Ludolph," said the Baron, deeply affected, which he was at no pains to conceal, "forget, if you can, my late barbarity; and in this embrace, at least, forgive me."

The contrite Baron folded the youth to his heart, and shed over him a flood of tears.

On recovering himself a little, he continued, "My poor Ludolph, your history is not unknown to you. The lines which we found pinned under your little chin when you were first discovered in our chamber, caught my eye this morning. They run thus :—"

' This child of chance,
Perchance may be,
By sword and lance,
Of high degree.'

"I have well considered these words, and if it meets with your wishes, which I believe it will, I have resolved to aid the developement of the prophecy they contain. A fine field is now open suited to the purpose, and also to your bold, dauntless, and enterprising spirit. King Richard is away to the Holy Land, on a fresh crusade, and a volunteer of your promise, will no doubt, be considered a high acquisition by our renowned monarch. With him you will gain fame by your valour,

and also a name for yourself, of which you have, hitherto, only had one bestowed upon you as the child of my adoption, though I have reasons for believing that connaturally you are entitled to no mean one. Time may unravel the mysteries of all. In the meanwhile return but as distinguished in war, as you are brave and good in peace, and the Lady Bona who I know you love, shall be the reward of your merits. Select the best suit of armour, and the best sword and lance the castle contains; you shall also have your favourite 'Black Dorset,' and may he carry you safely to conquest and glory. Other weighty concerns keep me in England, or you should have fought under my banner."

Ludolph's eyes glistened with the highest delight at the Baron's proposal, and without hesitation most cheerfully embraced it. The end of three days saw him ready for his departure. On the evening of the last day he sought a private interview on the terrace with the Lady Bona, who had now recovered from her indisposition. The meeting was most

affecting. For some minutes they had not power of speech, and they silently fell into each other's arms, where they remained locked in a combined emotion of unutterable love, hope, anxiety and fear, all struggling in their turns for mastery.

"And are you for the wars in a stranger's land, dear Ludolph," at length said the lady-maiden, with ill-suppressed concern, and glancing an eye upon him which keenly expressed, "and shall I ever behold ye again?"

"Yes, sweet love, I go," said Ludolph, "for name which I have not; for fame which I will gain; and for what is dearer to me than life and all—for my own gentle Bona, whose affections must be bestowed where distinction and merits, at least, equal the pretensions of others, however all may fall short of her deserts. These I go seek for, sweet lady, to return with them, and then to claim thee on thy love and thy father's promise, If I return not—dear love,—if I return not,—do not grieve, but rejoice

that, however inglorious in name, I fall not into an inglorious grave."

"The hope," said the Lady Bona, "that you will return full of renown is strong upon me, and it shall cheer me during your absence. Be discreet, dear Ludolph, and not too bold; in a strange land, and a stranger among your own countrymen, what succour will aid you in an extremity? Alas! what dangers will surround you! Of all things beware of De Bellemonte; he, too, goes to the Holy Land, and he is thy subtle and cruel enemy. Shun him as a more bitter foe than you can find in the host of infidels you will battle with. I have with me something you must wear in remembrance of me, Ludolph; it is a likeness of myself in a stone, delineated by its veins; it is a rare and great curisoity. My father, before I was born, was walking on Afric's shore, washed by the broad Atlantic, during the prevalence of a mighty tempest. Wave rolled over wave, and dashed high upon the beach. From amid the foaming surge a large

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pebble was cast at his feet, which broke in twain by the violence of its fall upon the shambles. My father collected the two fragments, which proved of a blood-stone, one half of which had, in the centre, the lineaments, in relieve, of a young female, traced in blood-coloured spots. He took care of the stone; brought it with him to England, and had it polished and set in gold. It opens and shuts by a spring, influenced by a slight compression near to a spot of white at the bottom. My father gave it to me. It is considered to bear a strong resemblance of me. Here it is, Ludolph, and may its separation and re-union be emblematical of ours."

The Lady Bona here took from her bosom the locket, more precious in the eyes of Ludolph than the most costly jewel; she looked at it for a moment, and then put it round his neck. He seized it with energy, imprinted on it a warm kiss, and placed it in his own bosom; when, casting his streaming

eyes up to heaven, he emphatically exclaimed to her short, but pathetic address, "Amen,—Amen."

A radiant light now gleamed though the air, as momentarily as a northern-light, and a strain of Elysian melody, which swelled with the passing breeze, and died away as quickly, captivated their souls. The two lovers soon after separated, vowing eternal constancy; and heaven-born hope soothed their minds, and made their pillows those of rest and peace.

The sun the next morning rose in unclouded majesty; and shooting forth his vivifying rays of day upon the drowsy earth, witnessed the departure of Ludolph from Godolphin Castle. He had risen with the morning's twilight; buckled on his armour, over which he wore a silk scarf, a most costly present at the period, from the Lady Bona, mounted Black Dorset, and after taking an affectionate farewell of all, he emerged from the Castle gates with the young and invigorating impulses of his mind,—love, hope, emulating pride, and

sanguinity,—irradiating his expressive countenance; affording a buoyancy of spirits to his mind; and giving an elasticity to his frame, all of which were a fair promise that, in his own determination, at least, the noon-day of his career should prove one of brilliant renown and shining glory.

The last winding of the road, leading from the Castle to the forest, through which he had to pass, brought him in full view of its ivy-mantled towers. He beheld the delicate form of the Lady Bona from the topmost turret, waving a white signal of a long farewell. He reined up his coal-black steed, and for a while gave way to grief.

“Then fare thee well, sweet lady-maiden,” said Ludolph, after a pause, “and may the bright angel of light watch over thee.” Then placing his hand upon the locket, and pressing it against his heaving bosom, he exclaimed—

“O, lady,—thou art the sun of my breast,—
As the dark mists of sorrow o’er it rest;
A look,—a ray from thee, so kind and fair,
Will melt them, in an instant, into air.”

Now patting the neck of his proud and noble beast, he said, "away, Dorset, away," when he and the two experienced and faithful attendants, who the Baron had appointed to accompany him, were soon lost to view in the thickets of the forest.

CHAPTER VI.

——“ I did kill King Henry ;—
But t’was thy beauty that provok’d me.

——“ ’Twas I that stabb’d young Edward :
But ’twas thy heavenly face that set me on.”
Shakspeare.

IN about a week after Ludolph’s departure, De Bellemonte asked of the Baron his daughter in marriage. His offers were rejected, by the Baron with civility and courtesy ; by the Lady Bona, who retained a lively remembrance of what she overheard from her casement, with scorn and indignation. A day had now been fixed for the knight-baron and his suite to leave, but it had gone by, and they were still at the Castle. Suddenly the overnight, the next morning at day break was finally appointed. An hour before the dawn, however,

he sent forward a body of his followers, who had themselves to lower the draw-bridge, for the warder had had given to him the evening before a powerful sleeping potion, purposely to hold him in a profound repose at the time of their passing out. When the van body of troopers had been gone more than an hour, De Bellemonte, was ready with the rest to hasten away.

On taking leave of the Baron and his Lady, he pressed a hand of each warmly within his own, and wished them and their fair daughter, to whom he commended himself, a thousand blessings :

“ There was honey in his tongue,
But deadly poison in his heart.”

The knight and his retinue were soon far away.

Two hours beyond the usual period of her presence at the breakfast table had elapsed; and no Lady Bona made her appearance. She had retired to bed early, feeling extremely drowsy, and as she had been recently so ill, orders were given not to disturb her in the morning, but to leave her to all the repose

she could enjoy. Now, however, the Baroness bent her steps to her daughter's chamber, which, to her extreme horror and dismay, she found empty, and in the greatest order. The alarm, as quick as lightning—spread throughout the Castle, but no tidings could be gained of the Lady Bona. Conviction flashed upon their mind, that De Bellemonte had carried off the daughter of the proud house of Godolphin. The Baron and a large party of his vassals were soon in saddle, and spread in all directions, but all their efforts to come up with the knight-baron and his train were entirely fruitless. The Baron Godolphin at night-fall returned, exhausted by his exertions and quite bewildered with grief. He directed the most experienced of his men-at-arms, to penetrate through the country, and not to come back, till they had found or heard something about her. The whole Castle was plunged into the deepest sorrow and misery; its Lord and Lady were quite inconsolable at the heart-breaking bereavement they had so unexpectedly sustained.

De Bellemonte had watched a favourable opportunity to infuse a somniferous draught into a cup of spiced wine, which the Lady Bona had had prepared for her by her mother, the effects of which she soon began to feel, though she had not the remotest suspicion of the cause. Its influence was so powerful that she reached her chamber more than half asleep, and she instantly laid herself upon the bed without undressing, and fell into a sleep, so deep, that it could be compared only to the sleep of death. The knight-baron, who did not retire to rest the whole night, found the lady-maiden in this lifeless situation, at the time he desired, in the morning. He gently raised her, wrapped her in his roquelaure, and committed her to the charge of the esquire, who took the place in his confidence of the one who was killed by the wolves, and who was, with his fair and helpless burthen, in the centre of the van, which left the Castle so secretly.

De Bellemonte and his followers passed from the forest by an outlet, in an opposite

direction to the one which had been taken by the band of troopers that had the care of the Lady Bona. The knight-baron pursued this route for some leagues, in order to screen himself, as he thought, from all suspicion of the abduction of the Lady Bona, from her father's Castle, in the event of pursuit, and being overtaken. Mid-day had passed without their progress being in any way interrupted; when feeling confidence, they turned upon a common, across which they passed, and then entered a narrow green lane which led to the open country, towards Wales, on the borders of which, one of De Bellemonta's castles was situated; to which, he intended the Lady Bona should be conveyed.

The esquire had received directions to halt at the ruins of a once splendid temple of the Druids, upon the borders of a wide plain, for the arrival of his master and the rest of his followers, which, it was anticipated, under any circumstances, would be by the fall of the evening.

During the whole journey to the ruins, the

lady-maiden remained in a state of complete insensibility. On reaching them, a fire was kindled of wood, leaves, and turf, for the place was chilly and damp; and she was placed before it, wrapped in the roquelaure, but all the attempts which were made to restore animation, were fruitless.

The owls upon their heavy wings had left their ivy shelter, and were marking the parting day, and welcoming the approach of night by their frightful hootings, when De Bellemonte reached the ruins of the temple of the Druids. His conscience deeply smote him, when he beheld the pale cheek; the colourless lips; and the motionless form of the daughter of his noble and hospitable entertainer. He smote his breast—he tore his hair, and in the wildest frenzy, exclaimed, “And, have I, hapless lady, been the cruel cause of this, thy pitiable condition? Alas! she appears as one who is dead. O! lady, open thine eyes—sigh—breathe—speak—speak; even curses upon my head, so that I know ye are alive. I loved ye to distraction, gentle

lady, and on the altar of my wild passions, I have sacrificed my fame and honour; which before, were dearer to me than life, and now, thou, too, art gone. Alas! no sigh—no word, no motion, to give me notice of returning life. To horse—to horse, genteel-men, instantly to horse,” vociferated the knight-baron. “No time must be lost in obtaining the service of an experienced leech, and securing a better lodgement for the night, than this desolate place affords.”

All were soon mounted. De Bellemonte now took upon himself the charge of the lifeless Lady Bona, whom he placed in front of him, with her head and bust reclining against his left side. They now prosecuted their journey with all the speed their tired steeds, and the rough and uneven nature of the ground would admit of.

The evening had closed in one watch earlier than it would have done, by reason of the heavy and misty state of the atmosphere.

The great night-lamp of the earth was already up broad and full; and through the

hazy watery mist which floated in the air, she appeared suspended from the starry high-vaulted heavens nearer over the earth than usual; but her silvery beams were less effective, and her face seemed of the hue of blood. The dark clouds, however, now advanced on the breeze, and spread an impervious mantle between the earth and the declining rays of the sun in the west, and the rising beams of the moon in the east, so that before De Bellemonte, with his lovely burthen, and his followers were scarcely two leagues over the dreary heath, the whole party were shrouded in complete darkness. The rain too began to patter down briskly, and, as there was no seeing their way, they gave themselves up completely to the guidance of their horses, which, no longer feeling the curb, took different directions along the numerous winding ways between mounds of mould and brushwood, as their instinctive bias lead them. Thus unconsciously the whole party became divided from each other in different directions, and all their endeavours to rejoin toge-

ther, by the calls that were made for that purpose, only served to increase their difficulties and perplexities, and to carry them still wider apart.

De Bellemonte upon finding himself separated from his followers, loudly halloo'd after them, but the responses he received came through the gloom from all sides, more or less faint, according to the distance they were made from. At length only two or three replies were weakly heard, and these were in calls for help and assistance; but they soon ceased to disturb the stillness of the evening, which now was only occasionally broken by the rattling of the rain in the small pools of water, which they passed here and there, and the hollow moanings of the wind as it swept through and over the thin thorny branches of the clusters of heath and brushwood, that covered the wide waste in which they were benighted, bewildered and lost.

The mood which the knight-baron was plunged into, was as dismal and dark as the mournful scene which encompassed him. At

thousand times he wished himself back at the ruins of the Druid's Temple; and as he felt the soft weight of the pitiable and lifeless lady, his frame trembled at the frightful consequences before him of his audacious, maddened, wicked and outrageous temerity. He struck his brow violently with his hand, which he left before his closed eyes, his mind being in a state of stupified distraction.

He was suddenly recalled to himself by the snorting, neighing, and uneasy movements of his war-horse. On opening his eyes his sight was dazzled by a radiant light which filled the air. The dark atmosphere appeared on fire, dense and glowing, as young and vigorous flames first bursting into fullness. Strains of the most affecting, gay, fascinating and delightful harmony sounded on the ear, while a heavenly voice, in tones of angelic sweetness, sang,—

"Twixt pole to pole, I take my way,
O'er mountain and the sea,
Now in heaven, and now on earth,
As quick as thought to me."

The pretty music then sunk on the sighing wind."

De Bellemonte was conscious of the presence of the *Ladye of the Rose*, and he shook violently with apprehension and fear. The eyes of his steed darted fire; its nostrils widely distended, it reared high upon its haunches, and pawed the air with its fore legs. De Bellemonte, who had lost all power of action, let go his hold of the lady-maiden, and she fell from the horse upon the ground without injury, though still in the same state of insensibility that she had remained in all day. The horse on the same instant took fright, plunged forward, and bounded away with the knight-baron across the gloomy plain. A watery brilliant from her dew-be-spangled robe was placed by the fair spirit upon the balmy lips of the Lady Bona, where it soon dissolved away, and its redolent and refreshing virtues again restored her to life and animation.

The Lady Bona then arose, and in the highest degree of wonderment and astonishment beheld, near her, her celestial preserver, with all the lovely appearances attending her:

as usual, and the air impregnated with the most delicious odours. The thick rain seemed cast off from about her, and to fall clusteringly around the glowing light which surrounded her. By the bright reflection of its rays, the descending shower had the appearance of a beautiful circular cascade of the most sparkling and brilliant gems, in the midst of which the godlike being stood in the same graceful attitude as when first seen, and holding to the moaning breeze her omnifarious instrument of gold and silver tints, from which breathed as usual, the most soul-entrancing and bewitching melody. The *Ladye of the Rose* quickly receded from her delighted gaze, moving towards the west. The bright and shining glory of her presence was then, by rapid degrees, dimmed, as if a veil of rain descended over her, when she seemed in a moment to waste away, and mingle in the dark shower and gloom, as a November sun appears to dissolve into the dark thick-spreading vapours of a mountain fog.

On the disappearance of the *Ladye of the*

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Rose, the lady-maiden was left in total darkness, and the pitiless rain fell in torrents about her. In trembling alarm she looked around for a place of refuge; nought but pitchy darkness, on all sides, met her anxious gaze. At last she was on the point of sinking to the earth with affright and dismay, when her strength and courage were revived by a light, which ever and anon flashed and glimmered to her sight only a few paces from her. She hastened towards it, and found that it proceeded from the dying embers of a fire, in the corner of some ruins. They were the ruins of the Druid's Temple, towards which, the horse had returned, with its master and his fair charge, when the rein was given it to take which way it pleased, through the dreadful darkness which prevailed.

The Lady Bona was glad to meet even with this retreat and shelter from the storm, which now began to rage most furiously, accompanied by peals of rolling thunder and flashes of vivid lightning.

The gentle lady, instead of yielding to de-

spair, in her novel and melancholy situation, immediately set about stirring up, and re-kindling the fire with some wood which she found near at hand. Having done this effectively, she then hung up before the entrance, to keep the weather out, the knight-baron's roquelaure, in which she had remained wrapped, and which was drenched through by the rain, in order to meet the trying emergencies of the case, in the best way possible, and wait with patience for the coming morn. She also felt quite famished, but she found nothing wherewithal to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

She seated herself before the blazing fire she had made, in the most appalling astonishment, at the miserable and forlorn situation in which she found herself placed ; and which she in vain strove to account for. The wind and rain to which she had been exposed, and the heavy state of insensibility from which she had so recently awakened, however, predisposed her to the influence of the fire's warmth, which brought on an immediate and

irresistible drowsiness, that soon sunk her into a deep and sound sleep. Under its congenial influence she reclined before the fire, on the bare ground, when all her painful anxieties were, at once, suspended, and for the time, fell into repose.

The storm passed off with the night; and the following day was far advanced, ere the youthful lady awoke. She felt much astonished to find that during her slumbers, some one had taken great care of her. Instead of the bare ground, she was reposing comfortably, on a bed made of leaves,* over which, one half of the roquelaure was thrown, while the

* Beds made of leaves were, no doubt, at this period, considered no mean luxury, since even extensive lands were held by the simple performance, when necessary, of an engagement to provide no better accommodation even for a King of England.

"John Baldwin held the manor of Oterasfee, in Aylesbury, of the King (Henry II.) in soccage, by the service of finding litter for the King's bed: viz. in summer, grass or herbs, and two gray geese;—and in winter, straw, and three eels, thrice in the year, if the King should come thrice in the year to Aylesbury."—MADOX, *BAR. ANGLICA*, p. 247.

Straw or hay strewed upon the floors of apartments was esteemed, at the same epoch, a species of luxury and extravagance. Thomas-à-Becket by such use of straw or hay, was guilty of great scandal in the eyes of his contemporaries.

other half served to cover her. Its place at the entrance to the ruins, was supplied by a ragged and many-coloured piece of drapery. Some fresh faggots had recently been thrown upon the fire, which was burning clear and briskly; and a small wild fowl was dangling before it. Close by the fire, a clean, but coarse cloth was laid over a piece of the trunk of a tree, with a wooden platter and knife, and a flask and a horn cup; and another piece of trunk hollowed out to form a seat, was placed near to the rude, but convenient table. The sight of these preparations for a repast was by no means displeasing in the eyes of one who had tasted no food the day before, and had awoke overpowered with hunger.

"The pomp of his" (Becket's) "retinue, the sumptuousness of his furniture, the luxury of his table, the munificence of his presents, corresponded to these great preferments;" (the high stations to which Henry had raised him) "or, rather, exceeded any thing England had ever before seen, in any subject. His historian and secretary, Fitz-Stephens, mentions among other particulars of his luxurious and expensive style of living, that his apartments were, every day in winter, covered with clean straw or hay; and in summer, with green rushes or boughs, lest the gentlemen who paid court to him, and who could not, by reason of their great number, find a place at table, should soil their fine clothes by sitting on a dirty floor."—HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

The Lady Bona, however, was not certain that these arrangements were made for her, though the idea that they were so intended, afforded some little consolation to her agitated, anxious, and bewildered mind. On arising from her humble couch, she was immediately struck with the greatest amazement and fright at seeing the piece of drapery slowly moved on one side, and a woman of tall and masculine stature, in the wildest attire, stand in the entrance, leaning on a staff, and bent a little forward in an attitude of caution.

"Be not alarmed, young lady," said the woman, in a tone of sorrow, on seeing that the object of her solicitude was awake and up, "it is only Peg of the Dell. How fare's it with thee, lady? thou hast had a sorry time of it. It would break thy parents' hearts, if they are not already broken at thy absence, to know the dangers thou hast escaped, and the privations thou hast endured."

"Pray tell me, good woman," eagerly said the lady-maiden, restored to confidence by

the knowledge that it was Black Peg, about whom she had heard much talk, though she had never seen her before, and by the kind and feeling manner of her address. "Pray tell me, how came I here, and where am I? where are my dear parents? oh! take me to them instantly; they are able, and will amply reward thee, good dame."

"Fear not, lady, thou art now safe," replied Peg of the Dell. "Sir Canute de Bellemonte stole thee from thy father's halls, and was on his way, with thee, to his Castle in the south, but was lost in the darkness of the night. This I heard from one of his retainers, who I found upon the heath, when the clouds began to break towards morning, moaning piteously, having been thrown from his horse, and sorely bruised. I proceeded immediately in search of thee, lady. In my way, I fell in with a horse without its rider, grazing quietly near a brook. Thinking it would much aid me in my design of finding thee, I seized the bridle, mounted, and hastened over the plain. I came upon these

ruins, and was surprised to see something hanging up before the entrance. I drew it aside, and beheld thee before the fire, laid upon the stones, locked fast in sleep. I took down the roquelaure, and placed my own poor garment in its stead. I dried the roquelaure, and quickly made thee a better place of rest. I raised thee without disturbing thee, and placed thee upon it. I fed the fire which was near expiring, and then went out for food, of which thou must stand in much need, after so long a fasting. I soon started a wild bird from the side of a brook, and brought it down with my staff. I plucked it, and placed it to the fire, before it got cold, * that it might eat tender and good. Some wine of France I had hard by. Come, gentle lady, partake of what I have provided ; and when thus refreshed, I will attend thee homewards, and before the fall of night thou shalt be locked in the arms of thy parents, where thou wilt be shielded from future harm, till claimed by one whose

* A very common practice in the country, at farm-houses, and other places, to this day.

arms, probably, will prove a better protection to thee against the future designs of a villain."

While the lady-maiden was pouring forth the thanksgivings of a grateful heart, Black Peg was busily engaged in taking up and placing before her the reeking bird, an oaten cake which she had made and baked that morning, and the flask of excellent French wine.

No persuasions, at that time, could induce Peg of the Dell to take share of the excellent repast which she had been at such infinite pains to obtain. "No, thank ye, fair lady," said she, in answer to the last invitation that was made to her, "I want but little. Be thou of good cheer, and eat heartily, for else thy slight frame, unaccustomed to privations and fatigue, may sink under these trials, and there is, I know, one at least, now far over the waters, who would die of grief, if ought of evil betided thee. I will be on the watch to guard against surprise, and when thou hast finished thy meal, we will away to Godolphin Castle without delay."

On saying this, Peg issued from the ruins, leaving the lady-maiden to the full enjoyment of the relishing fare, of which she partook with great appetite. She left, however, an ample supply for Black Peg, who, on her return, could no longer resist the importunities of the considerate young lady, to break her fast, and finish the remains which were reserved purposely for her.

A great alteration had taken place in the appearance of Peg of the Dell, in the lapse of years, from her first mysterious visit to Godolphin Castle. Her hair was turning very grey, and the lines upon her still more swarthy and weather-beaten visage were much stronger than what could have been simply the effects of age—the progress only of nineteen years. They were the lines of care—of watchfulness—of little rest—of exposure equally reckless to the wintry blasts, the summer's heats, or the pitiless storms ; and there was now to be observed a little stoop in her carriage, which formerly was so remarkable for its erectness.

The Lady Bona under the plea of viewing the country around, left the ruins while poor Peg dispatched the broken fragments of provisions. With her that was but the act of a moment, and the next instant she was engaged bracing on the saddle of the horse, which she had safely fastened to a tree, the roquelaure, so as to make an easy and comfortable seat, in the form of a side-saddle. The lady-maiden was then soon mounted, and they took their departure from the dilapidated Temple. Black Peg walked at the head of the steed, and took a short and safe direction to the Castle, (which she was enabled to do by her intimate knowledge of the country,) where they arrived just as the great luminary of day went down upon the sea, tinging the undulating waves and the clouds of evening with gold, by its glowing and fiery ray's.

Black Peg wound a loud and long blast from the horn, suspended by the side of the Castle gate, and then, ere its shrill summons had ceased to vibrate upon the ears of the

startled inhabitants, or the neighbouring hills to return the last echo, she had receded into the shades of the glen beneath, leaving the Lady Bona, awaiting alone the fall of the draw-bridge, to pass into the Castle.

Deep and affecting was the joy which welcomed the return of the lovely daughter of the house of Godolphin to her parents' halls. The walls rung with gladness, where stillness had before reigned, out of respect to the great and poignant sorrow of Lord and Lady Godolphin, for the loss of their only and darling child.

CHAPTER VII.

"Eventful day ! how hast thou chang'd my state !
 Transplanted now to the gay sunny vale,
 Like the green thorn of May, my fortune flowers,
 Ye glorious stars ! high heav'n's resplendent host !
 To whom I oft have of my lot complained,
 Hear and record my soul's unalter'd wish !
 Dead or alive, let me but be renown'd !
 May heav'n inspire some fierce gigantic Dane,
 To give a bold defiance to our host !
 Before he speaks it out, I will accept :
 Like Douglas conquer, or like Douglas die."

Home.

LUDOLPH, on his way to the coast for embarkation, fell in with many straggling parties of men—knights, esquires, archers and lancers—similarly bound to himself; but their rude and boisterous mirth, and licentious carols, upon the road,—some influenced by a complete indifference to the best associations of life; while others sought by joining in such

extravagant demonstrations of feeling, to banish their regrets at leaving their friends and native shores, and be inspired with the same callousness of sentiment as their companions,—prevented him joining company with any of them; though he felt very desirous of forming some acquaintance with those who, like himself, were about entering a field of strife and slaughter; but he saw from the rough examples before him, that it was highly necessary to be very circumspect in his selections.

The shades of night had already fallen upon the valley, which the youth with his two attendants had just traversed, and the last glimmer of twilight but faintly lingered over the brow of the mountain cliffs which hung abruptly over the sea, as he was ascending a narrow winding path that led to a monastery of Black-Friars—a branch of the main establishment of the order of that name, near to New-Gate, one of the outlets from the City of London—which was beautifully situated in a hollow between two cliffs, where he hoped to find shelter and rest for the night. The

night completely closed in upon him, ere he could reach the wished-for destination. The young moon and the stars, however, shed a light upon his dangerous way, and at length the vesper-bell of the monastery chimed cheerily to his heart, and announced the near proximity of the monastic abode, though the sound came strong or weak upon the ear, as the evening sea-breeze swept high or low down the winding hollow of the acclivity he was mounting.

At length, moving round the last curve of the cliff, he suddenly came upon the monkish, gloomy, tessellated and extensive range of building. The high arched porch of the principal entrance was right before him. However dismal the walls appeared from without, all within was hilarity, bustle and confusion, which must sadly have discomposed the monotonous, uniform and quiet habits of the holy fathers, who, in spite of the unusual noise the monastery was now the scene, were solemnly engaged in the chapel, in the performance of evening vespers.

Richard, surnamed Strongbow, Earl of Strigul, or Pembroke, who had married Eva, daughter of Dermot Macmorrogh, King of Leinster, and who had been appointed by King Henry II. Seneschal of Ireland, which he had been a principal and distinguished instrument in subduing to the English power, but, on the death of Dermot, he became sovereign of the Kingdom of Leinster, had arrived late in the afternoon, with his son William, the Lord Herbert, and a large party of knights, esquires and archers, intending to embark the next morning, from the neighbouring port, for the Holy Land, to which place he was expressly invited to go, with his friends and vassals, by King Richard of England.

Ludolph from his noble and gentle mien was at once admitted into the monastery, and ushered into the refectory, where the Earl Richard was taking refreshment with his son, a youth about the same age of Ludolph, in company of a few of his principal knights, while the two faithful attendants upon Lu-

dolph, after seeing to the comforts of Black Dorset and their own horses, soon made themselves at ease, and quite at home with the rest of the Earl Richard's followers, who were distributed about the other parts of the monastery.

From the favorable accounts which they did not fail immediately giving of their young master, and the statement they made that he was the affianced husband,—and the one of her choice,—of the fair daughter of the rich and puissant Baron Godolphin, (all which particulars soon reached the ears of Earl Richard,) every one felt disposed to show Ludolph honor and attention.

The Earl Richard, King of Leinster, was very marked in his civility and condescension to him. The earl sought, thereby, to attach him to his own person, interest, and banner; which he was more particularly desirous of doing, as he saw in Ludolph a most excellent and desirable companion in arms for his son, the Lord Herbert. Ludolph highly pleased and flattered by the notice taken of him, by

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personages of such high consideration, made no hesitation in agreeing with the proposal of Earl Richard for embarking with him to Palestine, which Saladine, the most distinguished monarch of the Saracens, at the head of immense hordes of barbarians, had overrun, and had also taken full possession of the Holy City.

A bond of firm and lasting affection was immediately formed between the Lord Herbert and Ludolph, to whose mutual rising fame and steady friendship, the Earl Richard took the last cup previously to retiring to rest. By many of the vassals, the night was spent in carousing, which the good Father Abbot did in no ways seek to check or prevent. Such scenes took place often at this period, to the great scandal of most religious societies, for the horror in which the tread of the infidel's foot upon the sacred ground was held, was principally inspired by the exhortations of the clergy and the religious orders, who wrought, by every species of excitement, the different Christian powers and chieftains to a

pitch of the highest phrenzy, under the influence of which the different crusades were undertaken; therefore, they encouraged, or at least, winked at such wild indulgences, rather than damp the ardour and enthusiasm of their votaries by an inhibition of those licentious practices, which, with most, had the effect of drowning all care, and keeping them firm to their purpose. In these scenes of debauchery and excesses, however, the clergy and monks themselves too often found excuses for joining.

The dawn had scarcely gilded the east, ere the small port—a fishing town*—beneath presented a most lively and inspiring scene. A fleet consisting of twenty-five sail of barques, light and heavy bottomed, were there collected for the purpose of bearing Earl Richard and his little army to the Holy Land, and were riding gaily and quietly at anchor in the spacious bay. The sails were already unfurled, and flapped to the breeze, which came in and strengthened with the tide.

* Supposed to be Lyme Regis.

Numerous boats from the shore to the barques, and back again, danced upon the waves, busily employed in conveying on board that portion of the Earl Richard's troops which had been quartered for the previous night among the fisherman's huts upon the shore. The whole scene was entirely new to Ludolph, who had risen with the first glimpse of morn, and had come down upon the beach to gratify his curiosity. He had never seen the wide ocean so perfectly before, having only viewed it from a distance, many miles inland, and he, therefore, had formed but a very imperfect idea of its power, grandeur and magnificence. His young, ambitious, emulous, and delighted mind expanded at the sight of the broad waste of waters before him, but as indefinitely as the notions then entertained of their limits, or of the sea-girt shores that they washed. He could scarcely give credence to his senses that the small and fragile vessels which, now at anchor, yielded to every breath of wind, and every ripple of the trembling waves, could, possibly, be the

medium of transporting o'er their ruffled surface, in safety, to shores far—far out of sight, the three or four thousand souls, who were then effecting joyously and fearlessly their embarkation.

“The time may come,” said Ludolph, mentally, in a musing posture, with his arms folded across his breast, “the time may come, when regions now unheard of, far beyond the distant line of heaven, and water, to be traced even from the land we are bound for, may be reached, and nature be developed that may astound and stagger the most comprehensive and speculative mind. Nought but the huge main and the bright heavens may meet the eye, but yet the sea must have its limits.—What if those limits should ever be explored?—Should nations of strange people be found upon the unknown coasts where the most distant waves roll, history and knowledge will gain vastly, while all histories of whatever character which we have, at present, however some may pretend to inspired authority, will be proved to be extremely narrow

and confined, in their views and notions, of the extent of the earth and its inhabitants.”

Ludolph's further prophetic and contemplative musings were put an end to by the approach of the Earl Richard, who now directed in person, the embarkation of the remainder of his little army, which was then effected with the greatest possible dispatch.

When all were on board, a signal was instantly given, to weigh anchor and put out to sea, as the state of the tide just suited for sailing. The barques soon brought up upon the wind, and answered to the helm, which directed their heads steadily from land. They were no sooner under weigh, and receding slowly and majestically from the shores, than the expedition raised loud and long-continued shouts, which were, most heartily returned, by the multitudes on shore, with whom were mingled the good and jovial brethren of Black-Friars.

There was one who cheered louder than the rest :—it was Peg of the Dell, who stood upon a point of rock some distance from shore, and

covered by the sea, which gave her the appearance of standing upon the waves. She flourished a piece of her ragged and party-coloured raiment, fixed to her knotty staff, and screamed, rather than exclaimed :—

“ This child of chance,
Perchance may be,
By sword and lance,
Of high degree.”

“ Of high degree,—of high degree,” she repeated several times over, louder and louder, till her voice sunk heedless and unheard upon the noisy waves.

The exhilarating cheers from the shores also, soon came fainter and fainter upon the ears of the voyagers, till they were lost altogether in the rumbling roar of the billows rolling upon the stony beach. At length, that welcome sound of being near land, which to a weary mariner, after a long voyage, is more gratifying, if possible, than the first sight of it, ceased ; and then, nought was to be heard but the bold and various splashings of the surge, as the bows of the different barques,

in ploughing their trackless course over the ever rising and falling surface of the mighty deep, dashed upon the swelling and tumultuous waves, and the hollow whistling of the stiff breeze through the shrouds and cordage.

Black Peg continued to wave her parting greetings with her ragged flag till the barques dwindled into mere atoms of themselves, and then she plunged into the sea, and swam to the shore.

Ludolph took his station, for a long time, near to the captain, and observed with astonishment, the ease and precision with which he steered his vessel amidst the fleet he commanded. Every thing appeared smooth and fair before him, as were, now, his own bright hopes. For the present, he had had no means of forming any conception of the frightful horrors of the scene, when a ship—which in fair weather is managed to so great a nicety, but in a storm with so much difficulty—will not answer to the helm, and is consequently, left to the mercy of the boisterous winds, and the mountain-swelling waves. She is then tossed

about with the facility of a cork—at one moment rising upon one huge wave, and the next engulfed between two, impending loftily over her, and threatening to burst in upon her from on all sides, and wash her, in an instant, in a vortex of waters to the bottom.

Three hours before the sun had reached the period of his declension, the shores, in every direction had sunk upon the smiling sea. Though out of sight of land, the fleet continued, for sometime, an undeviating way with a stiff favourable breeze, directed by the course steered by the commodore, or admiral—the light in which he was considered—whose means for steering aright, were derived from the course of the sun, the moon, the position of a given planet or star in the direction of the land they were bound for, which was the only mode of navigation at the period.

The sun, the moon, different planets and stars, and points of land, were the “land-marks” for guidance in navigation, before the great, splendid and useful, though simple discovery of the

compass; which, for its simplicity, and the vast and universal magnitude of the effects and advantages which have resulted from it, has no equal in all the wonderful discoveries of man. With it the whole globe has been traversed and re-traversed, with confidence and certainty; nations, which before were unheard of, and far out of the reach of all communication with the other parts of the world, have been visited again and again; the most remote regions have been brought into immediate and close compact and connexion, one with another; commerce has been indefinitely extended over the face of the earth; the products of the different hemispheres are interchanged with general safety, certainty and dispatch; and communication is maintained between the four quarters of the globe in a space of time, nearly as short as was formerly occupied in a voyage even to neighbouring countries. These are the manifest good and all-important consequences which have attended the discovery of the compass. Every succeeding generation owe a deep debt of grati-

tude to the discoverer, and to the bold, enterprising and dauntless navigators and circumnavigators—all Europeans—who first applied it to the furtherance of such remote researches, and to the attainment of such immense, incalculable and still growing benefits to mankind. Antecedently to the use of the compass, navigators seldom ventured out of sight of land. Hence, the profound ignorance in which the people of different distant countries, from the beginning of the world till then, remained of the existence of each other. But to return to the progress of the *Legend*.

The sun, at length, sunk down upon the waves, tinging them, most splendidly, in a long line athwart the ocean, with his gold-shot rays, which also illumined and crimsoned the clouds above, which in their glowing, gay, and vivid colours, were beautifully reflected upon the shining surface of the dark green main, and seemed to be embodied in its springing waters; so that the barques sailed, to all appearance, over an undulating sea of

golden clouds, with the blue heavens, before them, for a land of destination.

The young moon then rose, but went down early, leaving the stars to shed their feeble light, and guide the fleet across towards the shores of Normandy, till the dark clouds, swelling upon the midnight breeze, obscured them, almost, entirely from view, during the remaining watches of the night. Now and then a star would twinkle through a break, here and there, in the clouds, but not sufficiently long and distinct to know which star it was to navigate by with any degree of certainty. A light was then lashed to the mast-head of the admiral's barque to keep the fleet together, and the admiral ordered that they should all keep upon the same tack till the dawn of the morning, when they would be enabled to take fresh observations for pursuing the voyage more directly.

The morning came, when it was perceived, that they had made but little way towards nearing the shores of the Franks ; for after the

obscuration of the stars, they had deviated many leagues from the right course, in consequence of change of tide, a slight alteration in the position of the wind, and getting into different currents, so that it was not before nightfall of the fourth day that they gained it. The voyage was then prosecuted, coast-ways, to the Holy Land, which was reached in two months from the period of leaving England, which was reckoned a short and prosperous passage.

The shores of the Holy Land, on their arrival, presented an animated and busy scene. Innumerable vessels—galleys and barques of all dimensions, and from many countries—were there assembled, having been freighted with warriors of all arms, who were already encamped some leagues up the country, towards Ashkelon, and in face of the infidels, over whom some few and trifling successes had been very recently gained, after the taking of Acre.

The Earl Richard's little army was soon landed, and instantly marched off to join the

main body of the Christian army, which, in fact, was composed of many armies, collected in different Christian countries by various Christian monarchs, and their several chiefs, who owed them fealty, but under whose several commands they principally acted and obeyed.

King Richard, of England, whose renown for courage, prowess, and personal exploits, of the wildest and most romantic character, had filled all Europe, possessed, however, by his unequalled fame, a power and weight in the war-council; an ascendancy of influence and command, superior to all the assembled monarchs and chieftains, which excited much jealousy and envy among them, but more especially with Philip—surnamed the August—King of France, who, though united in the same sacred cause, did not forget that his brother royal-crusader was his powerful rival—the monarch of a brave, proud, thriving and enterprising nation—to whose transcendent qualities, he thought, it did not beseem him to bow. These jealousies, however strongly

evinced before battle, in a council among the chieftains as to what plan of battle to adopt, and about other matters concerning the mode of warfare to be carried on, subsided altogether when the battle once commenced, for then a spirit of honor and emulation actuated all, which gave a tone and direction to their courage and efforts for gaining one common end—the defeat of the enemy, and a successful issue to the cause. This principle was so generally entertained, that even Sir Canute, Baron de Bellemonte, who had also arrived with his followers, whom he succeeded in collecting together after their singular dispersion over the plain, forgot his mortal hatred to Ludolph, and was found to back his efforts in putting to flight, at the head of thirty esquires, and three hundred archers, part of Earl Richard's contingent of troops, a large body of the infidels, on the third morning after forming their junction with the heterogeneous forces of the Christians.

The grand combined army of the Crusaders had now been reinforced by various

bodies of soldiers, to an extent, altogether, of fifty-five thousand men of all arms, which was an increase of force that enabled it, immediately, to make preparations for commencing offensive operations against the infidels, who had been, from day to day, hovering about the Christian entrenchments, in vast and flying hordes, and were ever upon the alert to take advantage of any favorable opportunity which might present itself, of attacking, with effect, any isolated post, or body of troops which might stray from the main army, and could be overpowered and destroyed by superior numbers. The enemy were in prodigious force, and, at times, were collected together in so large and dense a body, that as they moved along the brow of a hill, or swept along the plain, the hill or the plain had the appearance of being alive and in motion, and rushing impetuously forward to overwhelm the Christians, as the mighty waves of a terrific storm sweep over a flat. Though huge in its masses of men, the infidel army were composed of light troops, principally

cavalry, who sought to avoid a general battle, and to cut off their enemy by surprises and skirmishes, for their elegant and light made horses could not maintain themselves against the powerful European war-horses, from which, when they came in collision, even as three to one, they recoiled back upon themselves like a wave from a rock upon the sea, but the slim-boned Arabians of the infidels possessed the advantage of nimbleness and speed.

Hence it was, that the infidels, in large bodies, hovered near the Christian camp—at one moment, menacing one point, at the next, another; at times flying, away, in all directions, when a serious demonstration was made to give them battle, and then, the next instant after, they were seen reuniting their multitudes, in a distant and unassailable position. This harassing mode of warfare had continued for some time, attended with great loss on both sides, but with partial success to the Christians; and it was now determined by the Chris-

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tian chiefs to bring the infidel hosts to a pitch battle, with as little delay as possible, with which object, the most active preparations were going forward in the Christian camp.

CHAPTER VIII.

" This is the man should do the bloody deed ;
 The image of a wicked heinous fault
 Lives in his eye : that close aspect of his
 Does shew the mood of a much troubled breast."

Shakspeare.

LUDOLPH entered upon the duties of his military career, with all the ardour and enthusiasm of a fearless, ambitious, and heroic spirit, which accorded so intimately with the soul-stirring chivalrous notions of the age. The position allotted to Earl Richard's detachment, was one much exposed to the enemies' predatory attacks ; was very fatiguing to the troops which composed it, and of great danger. Many attempts had been made in the night-time to fire the Christian camp, therefore, an incessant watch was established along the whole line of encampment to guard

against such attempts, and all other surprise ; and certain officers were appointed to go the rounds of the sentinels, during different watches of the night, in order to see that they did not sleep upon their posts. Ludolph, eager to distinguish himself, scarcely allowed himself time to take any rest ; and at his own particular request of the Earl Richard, he had performed the duties of officer of the watch, for several nights in succession, during which time he had baffled three attempts of the enemy to set the Christian tents on fire.

On two occasions, on going his rounds, he encountered a man, closely muffled up in his cloak, whom he challenged, but receiving the pass-word for the night, he took no further notice of him, considering him to be an officer, like himself, charged with vigilance over the sentinels, for the general safety of the camp, and had only strayed a little from his beat.

The Earl Richard in order to give his son, the Lord Herbert, and his friend, the youth

Ludolph, early notions of military discipline, particularly of incessant watchfulness in time of active war, appointed, at first, the two friends to take alternate nights of duty; but such was the lively friendship established between the two youths, and their devotion to their duties, that the Lord Herbert's night was companioned by Ludolph, and Ludolph's by the Lord Herbert, so that, in general, they were in company together, and the bonds of friendship which united them from the first, were drawn indissolubly together. The Lord Herbert, who had also met the stranger, agreed with Ludolph that he was a patrol-officer, or one of the superior chieftains who had left his tent to observe if the patrol-officers, and sentinels kept true to their duty; under which impression, no particular charge, or notice was taken of his appearance.

Ludolph, at length, began to feel the want of proper rest, and one night in his rounds, as usual, with the Lord Herbert, he was so overpowered with fatigue that he, almost, fell asleep while walking.

“Retire to your tent, and take repose, my dear Ludolph,” said the Lord Herbert, who perceived the exhausted condition of his friend. “You must much need it after such incessant watchings. I will accompany you there, and afterwards continue alone the rounds for the remainder of the night, which, by the progress the moon has made, will only last three watches more. I will join you at your first meal for the day.”

Ludolph scarcely heard the kind address of his friend, who now led him, in a state bordering upon total unconsciousness, to his tent, where his expressions of thanks, died upon his lips, from over-drowsiness. His two attendants were there locked fast in sleep. The Lord Herbert did not disturb them to attend upon their unconscious master, but undid, himself, Ludolph’s helmet, ungirted his sword, took off his cuirasse, and then, finding that he was already dosing, he laid him gently upon his couch without disrobing him further, when he sunk upon his pillow immediately into a profound sleep.

A few tents off, on his way from his friend, the Lord Herbert saw in the moonshade of a tent, the same person who had attracted their attention before. He challenged the stranger with the watch-word for the night, which had been appointed by Ludolph.—

“The guerdon,” exclaimed the Lord Herbert, quickly.

“A lady’s love,” returned the stranger, as sharply.

“All’s well,” was the rejoinder of the Lord Herbert, “and may the love of thy lady-love reward thee for the perils of the war, and for thy faith and honor.”

“Amen,” added the stranger, in a deep smothered tone, and instantly disappeared among the tents.

“This is very strange,” said the Lord Herbert to himself, on his disappearance, as he proceeded on his visits to the different sentinels’ posts. “I wanted to engage him in conversation that I might satisfy myself who he was; but he seemed to anticipate my design, and avoided me. I will be on the alert.

I will hasten my rounds, quickly repair to my friend's tent, and confer with him upon the adventure. Something strangely mis-gives me if there be not evil in that man,"

With this feeling, the Lord Herbert pursued his rounds, expeditiously; but with a heavy cloud of foreboding over his mind which he could not shake off, though, for entertaining which, he in vain, racked his brain for a cause.

Ludolph's tent, in the meantime, remained in profound quiet. The stillness of the tomb prevailed there; all was hushed in the blood-chilling silence of death. The heavy breathing of Fidelfo, the chief and favorite attendant upon Ludolph, occasionally, however, broke upon the sepulchral repose,—but, unconsciously, upon the three sleepers, like the hollow sighs of a distant breeze, dying away upon the desert. Yet, there was one who heard it—it was the mysterious stranger, who, in consequence, stood for awhile, hesitatingly, at the entrance of the tent, and whose shadow trembled on the moon-beam which penetrated the interior, and which

it darkened. Finding, however, all remain undisturbed, he softly entered the tent. The moon then shot her pale beams unshaded within it, and lit him to the couch on which Ludolph was reclining. It was, by this time, the period of the morning of the full moon's declining light, on the eve of the rising dawn. The stranger raised high his hand,—it held a dagger, whose polished blade, gleamed with the moonshine, on the shade of the tent, like a flash of lightning on a dark cloud, as it descended with rapidity and force, to the breast of the sleeping Ludolph.

The dagger penetrated the mail-shirt and vest, but struck, heavily, upon the stone locket which had been presented to Ludolph by the Lady Bona, and instantly snapped in twain short at the point. The violence of the blow, convulsed, for a moment, the frame of the youth, but did not wake him, so deep was the sleep into which he had fallen. The shock, however, caused him to slightly move; he then turned upon his back, his arms fell by his sides, and, with a deeply drawn sigh,

he sunk again into complete insensibility. After the pause of a second (during which he watched all these appearances with trembling anxiety) the assassin laid his left broad hand upon the bare throat of Ludolph, and his right was again uplifted to repeat the blow with certainty ;—but, as it fell, the stroke, midway, was rendered nerveless, its fatality was arrested, and the broken pointed dagger fell from the murtherer's grasp, who then groaned deeply, and, with a horrid imprecation, rushed from the tent.

At the critical moment, in the minutest space of time, a glaring light crimsoned the tent, which appeared one blaze of fire, and the most bewitching, soft and plaintive strains of music came strong upon the gentle gale. The heaven-born creature of light—the *Ladye of the Rose* was passing slowly over the tent.

The sudden light, and the enchanting music, it was, which shook the frame of the assassin with alarm that averted the deadly blow, but, in withdrawing his left hand from the gripe

he had taken of the youth's neck, he, in his agitation, smote him lightly on the face, which instantly awoke him, and he saw his intended murderer rapidly recede from his tent. Ludolph's attention, however, was immediately drawn off from the circumstance by the illumined appearance of his tent, which, he thought, had been fired by the infidels. He instantly roused his attendants, seized his sword and shield, and flew to the entrance. Instead of the enemy, he beheld the angelic being moving in the air, lingeringly and majestically a short distance from the ground, and chanting in a strain of music of ethereal sweetness, while the notes of her omnifarious instrument trembled softly on the swelling breeze,—

“ My way is on a light blue cloud,
That floats along the air ;
And passing o'er the horizon,
To other climes repair.”

One of her pretty little feet was resting on a small curly blue and cream-white cloud, the edges of which were glowing red with the rays of the rising sun, which, as yet, had only

half emerged from the ocean, while her other foot was gracefully curled up in the air. Her omnifarious instrument was, as usual, held to the wind, and imparted the sweetest harmony to the morning breeze, which was also impregnated with the most delicious fragrance. The heavy dews of the east seemed to fall thickly from her flowery robe and ornaments, like so many small stars, while the drops that remained upon them appeared larger than usual, and dazzled the eye with their glitter and brilliancy. Her golden locks were of a deeper and more glossy cast; her blue eyes were of a richer tint—a pale violet blue; her pouting, small, and pretty lips were of a finer vermillion, though her cheeks were fair as the lily-leaf, slightly flushed with a colour like the blossom of the peach; her face was irradiated with a never-changing fascinating smile; and her unique, round, but tapering figure was most beautifully defined upon the clear air, before the cloudless azure sky. She now moved off most gradually on the light cloud, wafted, to appearance, by the slight wind that

blew, over the dark walls of Ashkelon, passing on towards the sun, which was rising from the east. As she proceeded through the clouds to cross over the line of the heavens and the sea, she appeared to be illumined with the richest, the most brilliant, and variegated colours, which were constantly assuming a variety of the most beautiful changes, as the rays of the sun fell obliquely, vertically, or horizontally upon her, till she reached the horizon, when her whole appearance became of burnished gold of the most vivid brightness; and the little cloud on which she took her flight, had increased on the way, and now seemed a wavy cloud of silver and gold of surpassing beauty. She there remained stationary for a short while, presenting a most divine and gorgeous spectacle—one unmingled blaze of the most dazzling charms—and then she vanished over the most distant wave, leaving behind her the cloud—her footstool—glowing red with light, but which, soon after, dissolved into air.

By reason of her slow progress, Ludolph

had never seen his lovely preserver from the wolves and the stake—as yet he was unconscious of the vital service she had just rendered to him—for so prolonged a period before, and therefore, never to so much perfection. He stood sometime after the *Ladye of the Rose* was no longer to be seen, transfixed to the spot in an attitude of devotion, overcome with feelings of delight, gratitude, awe, and wonderment. He inwardly offered up a fervent prayer of profound homage and thanksgiving, in which the beloved name of the Lady Bona more than once occurred, the associations of his sensitive mind recalling the interesting, but momentous period, when he last saw the lady-maiden and his ethereal saviour together—the period when he was in peril of being burnt alive for witchcraft.

He was, at length, roused from his reverie by the Lord Herbert, who had just come off duty, giving him a hearty shake.

“Why, how now, Ludolph,” said his friend, “what ails thee? Art thou sleeping, or hast thou lost thy senses?”

"O! the sweet and beauteous creature!" exclaimed Ludolph, "did you see her, Herbert, did you see the lovely and celestial being?"

"See what—see what?" returned the Lord Herbert. "I have seen no 'sweet and beauteous creature,' no 'lovely and celestial being,' Ludolph, but I have seen some foul fiend, methinks, in the man enveloped in a cloak—the same we have seen before—who has crossed my path twice during the morning patrol. The last time he was, with hasty and unsteady steps, coming from this part of the camp, betraying great confusion. I pursued him for some distance, but he succeeded in evading me. He was well acquainted with the pass for the night, and should be a friend. I cannot conceive his reasons for avoiding me;—there can be no good in him, Ludolph."

"Now you speak of it, Herbert, I recollect seeing him myself, on waking, recede from my tent," said Ludolph, "what in the name of goodness could bring him there?—but

Herbert, let me lean on thee; I feel somewhat weak, and my breast pains me acutely."

"We will in to the tent," said the Lord Herbert. "Come, my friend,—I wish to heaven I had not left thee," casting a look full of anxiety upon the face of Ludolph, which now had assumed a deadly paleness. "Much I fear me, that some dire evil has been designed and perpetrated against thee."

Ludolph reached his couch with difficulty. The Lord Herbert now espied the two parts of the broken dagger, which were on the ground, close by the side of the couch.

"It is as I suspected," he exclaimed in picking them up, "here has, indeed, been a foul deed committed, or attempted against thee, my dear Ludolph."

An immediate, and a minute examination was proceeded in, when the extent of the design, and the very narrow escape which Ludolph had had, were at once apparent. The stone of the locket, which had proved his preservation in the first instance, was chipped

by the point of the dagger, which had struck the locket with so much force upon his breast near the heart, as to cause an angry and painful contusion over the rib-bone, which was also bruised and injured, and this it was, which brought on the faintness, and gave the excruciating pain of which he complained.

No satisfactory conjecture could be formed, as to whose could have been the wicked hand to aim the murderous blow. It could not be an assassin from the infidels' camp, for why should he be singled out, from amongst so vast a number of warriors whose personal importance was so much greater than his, for a deed of darkness so base and cowardly? besides, the action had not the chivalrous daring of an enemy in war:—no—it must have been, they both concluded, a secret and dastardly enemy in their own camp. But how, and in what way could the brave and single-hearted youth have made, so early in his career, an implacable enemy who should seek his life—this inquiry puzzled them, without their being able to deduce from it, any satisfactory

conclusion. The warning voice of the Lady Bona—"of all things beware of De Bellemonte, he, too, goes to the Holy Land"—arose to the mind of Ludolph, but the suspicion to which the emphatic words gave rise, was dismissed, as soon as created, as being equally unworthy of him to entertain, as it must be, he thought, undeserved by the knight-baron, against whom it arose. Ludolph, now, began to exhibit symptoms of exhaustion and drowsiness, and therefore, the Lord Herbert left him to his repose, charging his two attendants to be very watchful over their master, while he slept, and promising, shortly to return to the tent.

Ludolph slept soundly all day, and was frequently visited by his friend, who would not have him disturbed from the refreshing slumbers into which he was plunged.

The darkness of night began early to overspread the camp, when Ludolph rose from his couch so much refreshed that he felt little or no inconvenience from the late adventure. He shortly after, received a visit from the

Earl Richard and his son, by whom the Earl had been informed of the base attempt which had been made upon his life. The Earl came to congratulate the youth upon his fortunate escape, and to bid him in future to be cautious of his mysterious and secret enemy. The broken dagger was examined with great scrutiny, but it afforded no clue to the assassin; it was put by in the hope that some time or other it might lead to his detection. The Earl Richard soon took his departure, leaving his son with his friend, and stating that he would issue strict orders to have the villain seized should he again be seen about, when he should meet with a punishment commensurate to his deserts.

CHAPTER IX.

"From camp to camp, thro' the foul womb of night,
 'The hum of either army stilly sounds,
 That the fix'd sentinels almost receive
 The secret whispers of each other's watch.
 Fire answers fire; and through their paly flames,
 Each battle sees the other's umber'd face.
 Steed threatens steed, in high and boastful neighs,
 Piercing the night's dull ear; and from the tents,
 The armourers accomplishing the knights,
 With busy hammers closing rivets up,
 Give dreadful note of preparation."

Shakspeare.

"I'll read you matter deep and dangerous:
 As full of peril and advent'rous spirit,
 As to o'erwalk a current, roaring loud,
 On the unsteady footing of a spear."

Shakspeare.

THE sun had been very sultry all day, and, towards nightfall, the dews of the earth rose from the plain with the density of a thick cloud, and enveloped the Christian camp in an impervious misty darkness. Ludolph resisted the persuasive injunctions of his friend to keep his

tent, and insisted upon accompanying him in his rounds, as usual. The two friends had thrice visited the different stations of the sentinels, who they found strictly watchful upon their duty. The last time the two young officers retired for a little rest to the most vulnerable position of their part of the encampment, as they considered it likely that the infidels might take advantage of the rising mist, advance upon the camp, and set it on fire, in many attempts at which they had hitherto been baffled, and to be prepared against all future attempts, the greatest precaution was still observed.

Here, however, they had not long remained stationary, before Ludolph had occasion to call the attention of the Lord Herbert to the clanking sounds which he heard from over the wall of the trenches against which they were resting, and which, were like those of a numerous body of armed men mounting an acclivity with difficulty, and their warlike appointments clashing against one another. They moved a few steps in the direction of the

sounds, when a forest of lights, quivering in the fog like so many "will-o-the-wisp's" over the marshes, met their startled gaze, though they could not see the hands that held them. The infidels were assailing the camp.

The two youthful warriors fell back and instantly wound a blast upon their horns, which was re-echoed by the sentinels through the encampment; and its sleepy inmates were instantly roused to resistance against the foe. The cry that the infidels were upon them, flew from tent to tent, and soon reached the extremest points of the encampment. Ashad been previously ordered, in case of any such sudden attack in the night-time, the Christian chiefs and soldiers concentrated about the high tank—the keep or strong hold of that part of the camp—as speedily as they could buckle on their armour and arms, and the grey darkness of the fog would admit, in order that the position of danger might be ascertained, and a sufficient force concentrated and dispatched to bear down upon the point at once to meet and counteract it.

The infidels soon set fire to a few tents, and the dense light which gleamed red on the gloomy night like the sun seen through a mountain mist, gave fearful intimation to the Christians of the quarter where the enemy had commenced their attack and work of conflagration.

The waving lights of links were now seen moving rapidly in different ways, and appeared through the thick hazy air like flitting magical flames, till their reality was too apparent by the greater flames, which they caused, rising in an hundred places at the same time, and the fair tents of the Christians disappearing by scores in the devouring element, which was communicating and spreading in all directions. At length, the great light from the numerous burning tents all in a line penetrated the dismal fog, and glared upon the slight and bright armour, and the grim and swarthy features of the front ranks of the infidels, whose dense masses were spread far in the rear, and beyond where the light would allow the eye to reach.

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No time was now to be lost, for the infidels were lighting their way, by setting on fire, tent after tent, towards the heart of the Christian camp, which in a few hours, it threatened, would be reduced to a heap of ashes, which would have been the overthrow of the Christian army. The Crusaders, by the advice of Richard of England (who upon the first alarm hastened to the post of danger) had waited this moment, in order to collect an ample force to repel the attack of the infidels with vigour, precision, and effect. The orders were now given, by the different chieftains, simultaneously to the troops under them, to advance in silence but with expedition, against the enemy, and when they should come within the sight of the infidels, and not till then, they were to give vent to loud shouts of war in the act of rushing upon them. A large body of men was marched round to take them, at the same time, in the rear of the fallen tents, and were to re-echo the shouts of those in front, while Sir Canute de Bellemonte, from his great experience, was entrusted with check-

ing the progress of the flames among the tents. This effected, the knight-baron was immediately to join the right wing of the line of battle, under the command of the Earl Richard, with all the forces he could assemble. Richard of England led the centre, and Philip of France headed the left wing.

The shouts of the Christians as they threw themselves upon the infidels, and the clang of arms soon announced that the awful and terrible conflict, and the scene of carnage had commenced. Cries of "death to the infidels"—"Christ the Saviour"—"the Holy Sepulchre"—"the bloody Cross"—"for Jerusalem"—"death—death to the infidels," mingled with the different names of favorite chieftains, rent the air with the violence of a varying roll, now high, now low, of a long continued peal of thunder. The infidels gave way a little, and fell back from the burning tents. The further progress of the flames was then cut off by De Bellemonte razing to the ground several tents, as yet untouched, in the vicinage of those already in flames, which

were soon a heap of ashes, and ceased to afford light to the contending armies. The Christian camp was saved by this clear-sighted, prompt, and judicious manœuvre of De Bellemonte.

By one of those simple oversights which have often proved the loss of great battles, and have rendered them more destructive to the defeated than they otherwise would be, the infidels still retained, in the dismal darkness which continued to prevail, the lighted links which shewed their front to their more wary enemy, gave direction to their archers, and caused them to sustain a prodigious loss. Wherever the lion-hearted king moved, he strewed with his battle-axe the infidels upon the ground about him, like the ripe corn here and there laid low by a mighty tempest. In places friend from foe could not be distinguished in the darkness, and many there were, in consequence, who fell by the hands of no foemen.

The bloody struggle had continued without cessation till the second watch past mid-

night, and the Mahometan forces still maintained with firmness and courage the ground they had gained in the Christian camp:—the only alternative they had, for an endeavour to retreat from the entrenchments in the dreadful darkness, would have been their certain ruin. A fresh breeze from the sea now swept over the hills and curled up the fog which then, in the folds of a cloud, rolled off from the face of the land, exhibiting the Christians and the infidels one to the other. The moon at the time was high in the heavens, round as a shield, and shot her pale beams nearly perpendicularly upon the frightful scene. The ashes of the tents which had been burnt, sent up smothering volumes of smoke, which mingled together in the air, and then, in clouds, was blown off the field of contention. An universal panic seized, for a moment, both armies, for the murderous encounter, as if with one accord, was suspended on both sides, the opposing combatants rested upon their arms and gazed upon one another with a feeling of timid defiance, which the peculia-

rities of the scene were so well calculated to inspire.

The crisis was thrillingly awful, and of the most inspiring interest. Small parties of the Christians, here and there, had cut their way into the midst of the enemy, and, now that their situation could be seen, they were in imminent danger of being slain to a man, by the active, nimble and numerous foes that surrounded them. Richard of England had mowed his way with his heavy battle-axe, unsupported and alone, into the heart of the infidel ranks; and his tall, robust, square, and powerful figure was seen standing, undismayed by the perils around him, majestically erect; and his battle-axe, reeking with gore, was half raised up ready to descend with a resistless sweep upon the devoted head of him, who could have the temerity to advance within its reach.

The lion-hearted monarch had not been idle with it, for it had done such slaughter that his highness stood in an open space which he had cleared, the ground of which

was covered with its victims ; but his position, now, was perilous in the extreme. He was in the midst of his enemies, so many companions of whom he had laid folded in death before them.

Such mortal and inveterate foes as the Christians and the infidels had proved to one another, during the whole progress of the holy wars, could not remain in such close quarters together long inactive. The shouts of the Christians soon announced the recommencement of the frightful carnage. Richard, now sensible of his danger, was looking around him in order to see where the least obstacles would present themselves to the attempt he contemplated making of cutting his way through the surrounding foe to rejoin his forces. The infidels, however, were closing in upon him slowly, and with caution, so great was the fear the hero's dauntless look, demeanor and conduct had created among them, while one—an expert and strong marksman—maintained his distance, and had raised his bow charged with a poisoned shaft,

which was aimed straight at the king's breast—the stoutest and boldest that ever presented a front to an enemy.

The bow was drawing full tight in the sinewy and brawny hands of the infidel, the shaft was steady in its deadly aim, and the next moment would have seen it winged on its fatal flight, and buried deep in the heart of the noble and royal warrior. But, in that moment, the strong and nervous arm, thus full charged with instant death, was itself laid low, stiff and powerless on the field. A lance most skilfully thrown, had pierced his side under his shaft arm, passed through his heart, and pinned him, lifeless to the earth. On the same instant, the loud shouts by a single individual, of “On to the rescue”—“King Richard or death”—“down with the infidels,” were heard close at hand, and, with the bound of a deer, a slim youth, of most gallant mien, sprang to the side of the hero-king. He was now followed by many of his friends; a passage, then, was soon made through the ranks of the infidels, and the

small party of warriors were greeted with deafening shouts of gratification when they rejoined their own troops.

Richard now proposed, and it was resolved upon at once, that the Christian forces should fall without more delay upon the Saracens, and by one universal rush drive them from the entrenchments. The infidels were already disposed for a retreat upon their main army, which covered the country beyond, the face of which appeared, in the moonshine, a moving mass of life and animation.

Strong day-light also by this time began to kindle in the east, when the infidels upon discerning the numerous bodies of Christians pouring down upon them from on all sides, sounded a retreat, which commenced in tolerable good order, but quickly terminated in a complete flight. Many threw themselves over the ramparts of mould which had been cast up out of the trenches, and perished. Not half of the infidel hordes who assaulted the Christian camp, lived to rejoin their innumerable companions who had collected in the

plain to support them in the attack, while the loss sustained by the Christians was, comparatively, very trifling. Those who reached the plain soon mounted their fleet steeds which were left in the charge of those who remained behind, when the whole of the Mahometan forces, bearing away with them the horses which had lost their riders, scampered away to their strong holds, pell-mell, like the rabbits of an immense stocked warren, out feeding, suddenly disturbed :—the plain was moving alive with them for a moment, and then not one was to be seen. The preparations of the Christians for active operations against the infidels, which had been sometime making, were not yet complete, therefore they were allowed to continue their flight uninterrupted, and without being pursued beyond the trenches.

The heroic deeds of Richard in the fight, inspired the various chieftains and soldiers with unbounded admiration. They now crowded round the hero with the most lively interest. He experienced more fatigue in

receiving his friends, than he had felt in the late severe encounter with his enemies. Philip Augustus attended by a splendid escort, also arrived upon the ground. The scene now became animating, grand and imposing to a degree.

“ I thank thee, brave brother of France,” said Richard of England, “ for the noble and able support thou hast afforded in this night’s momentous struggle. And thee, good cousin of Leinster, for the aid thou didst so timely lend us when our person was so compassed about by those curs of infidels. We thank thee, brother nobles, knights and soldiers, all, right well have ye maintained thy courage, fame and glory ; Jerusalem must fall before their power and influence. But where is that dauntless youth who seemed to drop from the clouds to our side, and seconded us so stoutly ?—By my king-head he is a noble and a brave, and made no boy’s play of it, as many of the fallen foe bear ample testimony. In good sooth,” concluded the king playfully, “ he wielded his sword with such

manly vigour and strength, that much we feared he would have numbered ourselves among the slain—a further proof of his great zeal and loyalty in our cause, and affection and care of our person.”

“’An please your highness,” said Sir Canute de Bellemonte eagerly, “I saw the heedless stripling bite the dust. His sword yet reeking warm with infidel life, was plunged hilt deep in another foe, but ere he could withdraw the ensanguined blade, an infidel stabbed him from behind, and he fell upon the blow to rise no more.”

“Now, by the holy rood,” said King Richard with strong feeling, “this grieves us sorely, and casts a damp upon the day’s joy. Let his corse be found, and due and worthy honors shall be paid to the memory of one, who, had he lived, we should have retained near our own person—a station he so bravely gained, and, but for this too fatal stroke of unkind fortune, would, no doubt, as bravely have maintained it. See, good Sirs, that”—

“Your Grace’s pardon! genteel-men, make

way there, make way," cried the Earl Richard, interrupting the king. "By your grace's favor, the brave and noble youth yet lives. I see him hither, coming, companioned by my son—his friend."

Way was instantly made in the direction pointed out by the Earl Richard, when the two youths were ushered into the regal presence, amid the loud cheers of exultation and gladness, spontaneously shouted by the group of warriors around. Ludolph was leaning upon the arm of the Lord Herbert, and had his left arm bound round with the silk scarf presented to him by the Lady Bona.

The blow of the infidel was well meant, but it failed in its purpose. His long dagger passed through the fleshy part of Ludolph's arm, and then glanced off upon the rounding of the breast-plate of his armour. At the same moment he stumbled over the lifeless trunk of a foe who had just perished by his sword, and fell to the ground. De Belle-monte saw Ludolph fall, and his wishes agreeing so well with the idea, he, at once, con-

cluded he was slain. The knight-baron was soon hurried away in the train of King Richard by the busy labours of the moving fight, and he saw nothing which happened to the youth afterwards. The Lord Herbert kept the enemy at bay, while Ludolph regained his footing, at which instant, the retreat of the infidels was sounded, which was immediately obeyed.

“Well, young Sir,” said the English King, addressing Ludolph, and smiling benignantly upon him, “it pleases us much to see thee; we feared thee lost to us. Thy name should be as distinguished as is thy bravery,—to whom do we owe so much?”

“Name, and please your highness, I have none I can lay claim to,” said Ludolph, deeply colouring. “I am a foundling, my gracious liege, but simple Ludolph is the name I am known by. The good Lord Godolphin, to whom I owe all, bestowed upon me that name.”

“The Lord Godolphin!—a goodly noble and a true,” returned the King. “If thou hast no name, well do ye merit one. Those

who bear a high one, cannot more well deserve it. Thy deeds, fair youth, hath gained thee a name of which the flower of our nobles would not blush to own. We will and pleasure it that thou mayest, hereafter, be called Lionel;—a name somewhat after a title of our own which has been given to us by favour of our loyal and loving subjects. Thou art of fair Darbye?—the birth-place of the true and bold. “Lionel de Darbye,” a name most nobly earned, and a bolder heart knighthood does not cover. Approach nearer, Sir Lionel de Darbye, and receive from our own hands the spurs of knighthood, due to thy valour and our own preservation.”

The lion-hearted monarch here stooped to unbuckle the spurs of silver and gold, which graced his own heels. The Lord Herbert hastily advanced, and kneeling upon one knee, presented the other bended for the royal foot to rest on, which enabled his highness to detach the spurs with greater freedom.

Ludolph, quite overcome with the most powerful emotions, approached with timidity,

and knelt before his sovereign. That heart, which when in the midst of a host of foes, swelled high with daring and courage, now beat with trepidation and diffidence.

“May I find favour in my liege’s sight,” said Ludolph hesitatingly. “To be plain Lionel de Darbye, shall ever be my highest pride and boast as the honoured gift of a king among warriors, and a warrior among kings; but the knighthood, I beseech your highness, to grant to one whom it will more become, and by whom it is more deserved. The Earl Richard’s son, the Lord Herbert, first espied, at the rising of the morn, the peril which surrounded your grace, and stoutly followed me to the rescue. And—and, sire,—”

“And what, Sir?” said the king, somewhat sternly, but which was foreign to his real feelings.

“And he saved my life, my liege,” rejoined Ludolph, with resumed firmness, “when I was prostrate with the infidel dead, and surrounded by their living friends who were falling vengefully upon me.”

"Yes," said the Lord Herbert warmly, "I saved his life when there was no one by to take it. The infidels had fled, sire, and all the service I could render him was to raise him up, and help to staunch the wound in his arm. I would not bear knighthood away from him, to gain the holy city. When your highness was environed by the infidel host, one of the strongest and broadest of the African bowmen stood aloof, and took a deadly aim at your royal breast. Ludolph saw the danger which threatened your sacred person, and on the instant flung his lance which struck the bowman dead to the earth, on the eve of his shaft flying to its precious destination. On the smite of death, the shaft flew from the bow, quivered up slantingly in the air, and then fell perpendicularly to the ground. How he managed it I know not, but he then, like a tiger, bounded through the foes before him, and the next instant after we saw him fighting by the side of your highness. The Earl Richard, Sir Canute de Bellemonte, and the rest of our small party then gained the same

spot with little difficulty, and our way, with your grace, was afterwards clear through the ranks of the enemy. Ludolph turned back upon the infidels, at which time he received his wound. Sire, vouchsafe on him to shew favour, not on me, for he alone merits the gracious consideration and notice of your highness."

"Brother Philip, of France, favour me with thy counsel," said Richard, of England, with a smile which spoke the depth of feeling afloat in his mind, at this amiable, generous and exalted contention between these youthful friends, each desirous of escaping a dignity, in order that it might be conferred upon the other. "I am quite at a loss to know what to do in this matter. There seems to be more difficulty in bestowing an honour, than in the glorious career which has been pursued, to deserve it. Guide me on this point, noble brother of France, an' it please thee."

"The due estimation of warlike and chivalrous exploits," said Philip, "cannot be in better hands than thine, brother of England. The

two youths seem both to have deported themselves well in the battle, and it would be difficult to say on whom, in preference, the favours of your highness should fall."

"Then approach our right, Lionel de Darbye, and the Lord Herbert our left," said King Richard, with lively emotion. The youths advanced, and sunk upon their knees before the warrior-monarch, who eyed them for some moments with marked interest, before he could command language to speak. At length, the hero of chivalry, presenting to each a spur, said, "two youths who run an emulating and an equal race of glory, ought to share the honours which it merits. Rise, Sir Lionel de Darbye.—Rise, Sir William, the Lord Herbert ;—thy regal sire will leave behind him his well-earned fame and title—and no name nor title could descend to a more deserving representative. Rise, brave knights ; and with permission of our noble cousin, Richard, of Leinster, we will have thee both constantly near our person, and will take thee into our especial favour. What say

ye, brother of France, have I decided befittingly?"

"Right well, and justly, brother of England," replied Philip. "No honour was ever more nobly earned, or more regally bestowed. The service was kingly, and it has been most kingly rewarded."

"But there still remains more to be done," rejoined King Richard. "Sir Lionel de Darbye!—no name,—no banner. A banner thou must have, good Sir, and wherever it be unfurled, it will, no doubt, be supported as it was gained—with glory. Herald! bring forth a banner of white silk."

On the banner being produced, which was done on the instant, King Richard took it in his hand, waved it aloft thrice over his royal head; and, pointing to the virgin-banner with his gauntlet, said, "this banner, as yet, has no designs or armorial bearings upon it. Here, then, is a fair and clear field open to thy young, bold, and aspiring mind. Exploits of valour and glory will, we fear not, soon cause it to be covered with honourable distinctions.

To mark the bright commencement which has so nearly concerned ourselves, let an arm-in-mail, grasping a lance, and surmounted by an imperial crown, be in the dexter quarter; we leave the *sinister*," continued the King, with peculiar point, "open to record thy fresh deserts. And now, brave youth, for a suitable provision for thee, for thou must not be left in a condition to have given to thee the surname 'Lack-Land,' of our fair-faced brother John; or that of *barren-knight*, which would be a most invidious play upon the title of 'Baron,' that we now confer upon thee and thy heirs for ever, in right and by *tenure* of a stout castle and its sylvan domains, which we grant and inseparably annex to the *lordship*.

"The Castle—Brooksby-Castle, by name—stands in the midst of Welland's-Forest and Royal Chase, that sweeps down to the Severn's smiling and eely * banks. The estate and

* The term "eely," used by King Richard, must have reference to the Severn's fame, at that period, for silver eels, which it maintains to this day. Myriads of little eels—numerous as the sands of the sea—come up the river about summer-time, and

manor have remained attached to our crown from the goodly times of the First Henry, our learned * great maternal grandfather, by whose side their brave and loyal owner fell, sword in hand, receiving himself the fatal stroke intended for his master. This castle and the fair lands thereunto belonging, we freely give unto thee and the issue of thy loins, for ever, together with thy barony, which they will help to support with becoming dignity. They are to be held by thee and them, now and for ever, upon these conditions :—a payment to be made at sun-rise on every succeeding anniversary of this memorable day, of the tri-

literally cover its whole surface. They can be taken at such periods, by buckets-full. In a wet season, the Severn, in many places, overflows its banks, and inundates the low-lands for many miles around, especially on its western side. The land, in consequence of it, and the flow of water from rains and springs from the high-lands, is intersected with numerous brooks which skirt the meadows and corn-fields in various directions, and swarm with choice silver eels. The rustic youths of the neighbourhood, have fine sport in "totting" for them with a piece of thick twine, and a bunch of worms tied to the end of it ;—a very easy and expeditious mode of fishing for them.

* Henry I., acquired the surname of Beau-clerc, or the scholar, from his high and rare attainments in literature. English liberty dates its dawn in this monarch's reign.

bute of one pound in silver monies—a fee to our principal herald; and on the same morning as early as convenient may be, a banner of the lordship of Darbye, with the additional bearings it may hereafter gain, together with one silver spur, to be deposited in our tower of London, as a gage of fealty and service; and one lance,* to be always ready to accompany the King in war or peace, at the King's bidding. We think, we need not stipulate for good entertainment for ourselves or our successors, when the affairs of state or pleasure, shall bring the King into that vicinage. In default, though, of the due and punctual performance in the services and conditions of retainer we have enjoined, the castle and lands become forfeit to the crown, and the title fails. By virtue of possession alone, the owner of the castle and land may, now, and for ever, claim the right of giving the King advice upon state matters, and of assisting at the great councils of the puissant barons of the realm for the nation's weal. When we reach merry England, these

* A man-at-arms, or warrior, is here meant.

grants shall be drawn up and registered in due form, till when the performance of the conditions are dispensed with."

Sir Lionel de Darbye (by which title he preferred being styled on account of the soul-inspiring associations attached to the name "Lionel," and by which he was more particularly known by his contemporary brother-warriors) drew forward, with his right hand, his sword in sheath, and then, with both hands, pressed the hilt of it, together with the royal gift of the spur—the symbol of knight-hood—impressively to his heart, its lively and grateful overflowings, glistening and trembling in his eye.

The two young knights now fell back from the royal circle, bowing the glowing thanks and acknowledgements of their hearts, which words could not adequately express; and when they had reached the rear, they fell into each other's embrace in an extacy of friendship, and gratified pride. As they moved away to make preparations for accompanying the regal escort according to the commands

of King Richard, their steps were followed with the waving of numerous banners and loud greetings, which, spreading from point to point, at length became universal along the whole line of encampment, under the impression, with most, that they arose in exultation at the signal overthrow of the infidels, but the news of the real occasion was now soon known all over the camp, and gave, with but one exception, universal satisfaction.

“We will anon,” concluded King Richard, “look into other claims upon our favor, though we fear it will be an endless task, where all have behaved so well. Brother of France, Richard of Leinster, Dukes of Austria and Burgundy, and noble cousins all, we invite thee to a banquet, in our tent, at two o’clock—an hour later than usual, in order that thou mayest take some rest after the fatigues of the battle, and come with good appetite to the meal.”

Horses now arrived for the monarchs and principal chieftains. Before the splendid cavalcade had proceeded far towards the royal

tent, it was joined by Sir Lionel de Darbye, mounted on his coal-black steed, and accompanied by the Lord Herbert. Sir Lionel had just appointed his two attendants to be his esquires, and they now marched at the head of his horse, Fidelfo bearing with infinite pride and satisfaction his master's white silk banner, which he waved, ever and anon, in great exultation. The Lord Herbert, mounted on a white charger was attended by a party of twenty of Earl Richard's serfs. The steeds of the new made knights seemed to sympathise in the light and gay hearts of their riders, for they neighed and snorted, pranced and ambled about full of gaiety and spirits, showing off their admirable and graceful horsemanship to the greatest effect.

The warriors, old and young, who were near enough to witness the interesting ceremony, pronounced the whole of it to have been, "a moving and a goodly sight."

Sir Canute, Baron de Bellemonte was the only exception to the general satisfaction which the favors King Richard had bestowed

on Ludolph had given, and so deeply did he take it to heart that he absented himself from the king's banquet, under the influence of an anxious uneasy state of mind.

The shades of night were falling deep, and thick over the camp, while De Bellemonte still continued to pace with a heavy step the space before his tent, his head bent forward over his breast in a musing gloomy mood, and his mind brooding over some dark and dire intent. His meditations were here suddenly interrupted by a stranger, whose fatigued, muddy, and dusty appearance sufficiently bespoke that he had just come off a long, but expeditious journey.

"Who and what art thou," said the knight-baron, in bitter sternness, "that dares to come upon us thus secretly and quickly?"

"I am a messenger from merry England, Sir Knight, and mean no harm," replied the man, stoutly. "Five morns past saw me land upon the coast, and I have hastened hither with all imaginable speed."

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“ Well, babbler, what is thy business ?”
inquired the knight-baron.

“ My business is first with King Richard,”
answered the messenger, “ and please ye, Sir
Knight, to direct me to his royal tent. I
then seek tidings of a youth named Ludolph ;
peradventure, thou mayest have heard of such
gallant spright ?”

“ Hey ! what — Ludolph, Ludolph,” re-
peated the knight-baron, his frame at the
sound of the name being convulsed with agi-
tation. “ Ye—ye—yes I know—that is, I
think, I know about him.—But tell me, sirrah,
from whom come ye ?”

“ I am hither bent with tidings from the
good Lord Godolphin to King Richard,” re-
plied the messenger.

“ Ah !——indeed,” said the knight-baron,
subduing his tone, and withdrawing his hand
from the hilt of his sword, which, at the first
impulse, he had rapidly seized. He then
added in a winning tone, “ faithful man ! thou
must needs feel fatigued after thy long travel.
In to my tent, and refresh thee awhile with

food and rest, and a cup of wine. I am to the king, presently, myself, and thou shalt go with me. Richard is himself feasting with a goodly company of chiefs, and cannot now be spoke with."

"Thy offer, Sir Knight," said the messenger, "is too much in accordance with my requirements, for me to decline it, for, since morning dawn, nought has past the threshold of my stomach, which is sorely rebellious after so long a fasting."

"In then, without more delay," said De Bellemonte,—“and thou shalt have a belly-full, if thy tidings are as I suspect them to be,” muttered he to himself. “We have had rough work of it all night,” continued the knight-baron resuming his usual address, after the messenger had washed the dust and thirst down his throat, with the third bumper of generous Burgundy, which was placed before him. “The infidels assailed the camp, but their defeat has been so signal, that, by the Holy Cross, they will not be inclined to show their tawny faces, within a league of us, for

some time to come. A stripling, by name Ludolph, I believe, fell early in the fight. He was but little known, and as little care was felt for his fall."

"It must be the same, I seek," said the messenger, putting down the cup which was again raised to his lips. "Poor youth, and art thou then slain?—Thou hast had many chances for thy life, but this comes of thy heedless temerity and rashness. There is one I have left behind, who will sorrow to the death for thee, if no one else will heed thy fall."

"Was he loved, then;" demanded De Bellemonte, in an assumed tone of indifference.

"Yes, Sir Knight," replied the messenger, "and by one whose love is worth a kingdom. The Lord Godolphin's fair and pretty daughter, was his affianced bride; and sweet hope of his return in safety, kept the roses still living upon her lips and cheeks, that now will fade upon the soul grieving for his loss, which, in spirits at his being, was the fountain of their existence. Alas she will now

droop like a rich flower of the rising summer, nipped by a winter's blast. Better that the false and base knight, who, equally senseless to honor, and a disgrace to knighthood, stole her from her father's Castle, had killed the hapless lady with his coward's hand, at once, when he had her in his power, than"—

"May the infidel's curse blast thee," exclaimed De Bellemonte, in interruption, rising from his chair, and half-unsheathing his sword; but suddenly checking himself, and suppressing the rage which was ready to choke him, he forced back the sword, and continued with ill-concealed confusion, "blast *him*, I mean, for I know the fair lady-maiden, and the foul—that is, the affair you speak of."

"Do you know," added the messenger, "all about Sir Canute de Bellemonte coming to Godolphin Castle?—about his followers conveying the Lady Bona away?—about her miraculous escape, and return to the Castle?—and about his seeking the life of the youth Ludolph on account of his love for the lady-maiden?—I was journeying it in Normandy,

while all this was going forward, or in good faith, a sentiment he knows so little of, he would not have found it so easy a matter to have got clear off, in spite of his knightship and his train of followers, all worthy of their recreant master ; however, I have come in full speed, charged from the Lord Godolphin, with a formal complaint to lay before King Richard, who will better know how to deal with so vile and treacherous a knight; though, if Ludolph still lived, I would not have given three barley-corns for the caitiff's life, when he came to learn of the wrong done and intended to his lady-love."

" May hell and the furies seize thee, thou pinch-gutted varlet," cried De Bellemonte, who could no longer restrain the fury which swelled his breast, and distorted his features to an expression of maniaccy, and which he had, hitherto, kept under by biting his nether lip till his teeth nearly met, while the blood gushed out in streams. He rose at the same time, drew his sword, and plunged it through the body of the hapless and indiscreet mes-

senger, saying, "go, tell thy tale to the fiends below, whither I dispatch thee upon thy errand, with a lighter heart than bore thee hither, thou glibed-tongued villain; thou foul and boasting slave, for thy tale-telling here is now all over for ever."

Hereupon De Bellemonte withdrew his treacherous steel from the messenger's breast, which was done as instant as the blow, when the blood rushed out from the surfaces of the deadly wound, behind and before, and then with a guttural, half-smothered groan, the life of the poor messenger which, the moment before was so blithesome, gay and affectionate, had, in the quivering of a flame, fled, and he fell to the earth, his limbs instantly stretching out stiff in death.

Stupified by the enormity of his crime, the knight-baron stood resting upon his sword, stained with blood, and gazed wildly, for some time, upon the lifeless trunk of the unfortunate victim to his ungovernable vices and passions. He soon, however, recovered from this state of conscious-smitten apathy, when

the danger and horror of his situation, at once, flashed upon his guilty mind, and he, therefore, lost no time, in putting the best appearance, that circumstances admitted of, upon the cruel and foul deed.

He took a dagger from the messenger's belt, and steeped its point in his own blood flowing from his lip—he could not venture to steep it in that of his victim—and then carefully placed it near to the right hand of the dead body of the messenger, as if he had justly fallen in making an attempt upon the murderer's own life. This done, he hastened to the entrance of his tent, and called lustily for some of his attendants. Three of them soon attended the summons, whom he reproached in furious terms for their negligence in allowing an assassin—here, he pointed to the dead body of the messenger—to steal into his tent, and nearly effect his design upon his life,—and here, directing their attention to his blood-besmeared face.

Death by violent means was so very common at the period, and as the most desperate

and brutal ruffians were inlisted in the holy wars, the tale was immediately believed, and no care nor thought was afterwards bestowed upon the matter, which was looked upon, by those who chanced to hear of it, as insignificant as it was frequent, more particularly as the soldiery of the crusades were remarkable for their lawless and licentious practices.

The orders of the knight-baron for the removal of the body, and for its being deposited among the bodies of those who had fallen in "the battle of the mist," as the night and morning encounter was styled, were obeyed with the utmost indifference. The hapless fate of the poor messenger was forgotten as soon as told, and his ashes mingled with those of the slain in one indiscriminate grave, near the scene of action.

CHAPTER X.

"O, Gertrude, Gertrude !
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions."

Shakspeare.

THE Lady-Maiden Bona felt no personal ill-effects from the recent most scandalous conduct of Sir Canute, Baron de Bellemonte, but her delicate and sensitive mind received so deep a wound, that it required all the soothing cares and attentions of her loving parents, to prevent a settled sorrow taking an irremediable root, and affecting her life.

The Lord Godolphin had no bounds to his indignation against the knight-baron, which was sympathized in by all in the Castle, and in the country around. The good Baron lost no time in despatching a trusty messenger to

the Holy Land, with a formal complaint to King Richard, against De Bellemonte, leaving it to the discretion and direction of the King — who was proverbial for a high sense of honour, in such affairs—to point out what steps he should take to seek and obtain ample redress for the grievous and outrageous wrong, which the knight-baron had perpetrated against his family and name.

The messenger was entrusted with the good Lord's gauntlet, together with a formal challenge to De Bellemonte, but the time when, and the mode how, the denouncement of the heavy charge against the honor of the knight-baron, and the defiance to battle, were to be given, were to be subject to the will and pleasure of King Richard, depending that in a matter of such weight and importance to the honour of the family of one of his barons, his gallant highness would decide aright.

The challenge set forth, that — “The Lorde Godolphin, one of the barons of England, of Godolphin Castle, in the Countye of Darbye, dothe before the Kinges

noble highnesse, his barons, and the whole worlde, charge and denounce Sir Canute, Baron de Bellemonte withe beinge a false and untrue knighte, a base violater of hospitalitye, and a cowardlye recreante to friendship, for in-as-muche that he, the knightebaron, while most honorablye entertained, housed and boarded, he and his followers, at Godolphin Castle, did moste outrageouslye and forcablye, abducte the Ladye Bona de Godolphin, the onlye and loving daughter of the Lorde Godolphin, from her parentes castle, wherebye the Ladye-maiden was in greate peril of life and honor, for which deepe and indellible injurye, the Lord Godolphin dothe challenge and demande Sir Canute, Baron de Bellemonte, to measure a lance or swordes with him, to the death, in the tilted listes, accordinge to the due formes and contingencies observed on all similar proceedings and occasions, or to acknowledge himselfe, for what he is herebye declared to be—treacherouse, base, and false-hearted, and a disgrace equallye to knightehood and to baronye.

The Lorde Godolphin sayes this."

This challenge never reached the king, or De Bellemonte, for it is seen in the last chapter, that the faithful messenger was cruelly murdered when he was near fully performing his mission. The poor messenger was also the bearer of kind greetings from the Lady Bona to Sir Lionel, as well as a few gages of affection, but an untimely grave enclosed his commissions with himself, for to search under his doublet, where all was secured, was never thought of.

The Lady Bona now took delight in tending her flower-beds, one of which was a bed of snow-drops and violets, and it was observed as a very curious circumstance, that though the first is a winter, and the last a spring flower, still, at this period, the height of summer, the roots shot up their flowers as luxuriantly as in their proper season. But what was more singular than all, there was in the midst of the bed a small rose tree, of which no one knew the planting, but which was always covered with roses. One of

them was plucked, daily, by the lady-maiden and placed in her auburn locks, which seemed to afford her great mental delight, as if the arrangement was connected with some very interesting associations. Another, the greater source of pleasure to her, was, in fine weather, to take a book and seat herself upon the turret, from whence she witnessed the departure of Ludolph, though her look was more frequently directed towards the spot on which the youth wheeled round his steed, and took the last glance of her, than on the book. By degrees, the lady-maiden regained the same equanimity of mind, which distinguished her before his departure. Every succeeding day, it was supposed, approached nearer the return of the messenger, whose arrival was wished for, even before he could possibly have reached the Egyptian shores, so great was her anxiety to hear tidings of her lover.

Within sight of the castle, but in an opposite direction to the forest, stood a nunnery, which had been founded and endowed about

seventy years before this period, by a lady of rank, who, in the hey-day of her youth and beauty, retired to its seclusion, and had ever since presided over it as lady-abbess. It was called "the Retreat of our Lady of Wo," and its gates were never closed against the miserable and wretched; the children of sorrow, here, were sure to meet with sympathy, consolation and succour.

The history of the good lady-abbess, previously to the foundation of the monastery, was never very well known, but it was universally believed that she was a lady of many troubles and misfortunes, and her great charities and goodness, and her retiring and silent habits effectually suppressed all prying curiosity to search further. Her life, since, had been one of an invariable character, and what at the period of the foundation of the building had been spoken of, in the progress of seventy years had fallen into total forgetfulness.

The sisterhood were denominated "the

Happy Sisters of our Lady of Wo," for though, principally, the sorrowful and grieved-hearted alone were welcomed into the society, yet such was the attention paid to their comforts and happiness, that their troubles and sorrows, which led them to the retreat, were very soon assuaged, and faded before more congenial feelings. The orphan, and the disowned, the friendless and the miserable, here found a parent—a more than mother in the amiable lady-abbess, and sisters in the sisterhood, who were no less so in character than in name, from the excellent example which was before them in their superior, and which they closely followed.

Though the lady-abbess was the fountain of the happy state of things which characterized the retreat, yet she never tasted of happiness herself. A settled sorrow sat upon her brow, grief had there enthroned itself so firmly that she was never seen to smile, though a dimple in the cheek, and a slight movement of the upper lip whenever any

thing pleasurable arose before her observation, showed that she had not always been a total stranger to joy.

From the period of her first taking up her abode at the retreat, she had never changed the character of her habiliments of mourning. She was now near a hundred years old, yet she was in full possession of all her faculties. Locks, white as the driven snow, which escaped from under a tiara made of black crape, and the deep lines—more from sorrow than even age—upon her serious and stedfast visage, only gave the indication of years, or showed the mark of time, which had still left the remains of considerable charms.

The Lady-Maiden Bona had been educated at "the Retreat," under the superintendence of "Our Lady of Wo," for whom she entertained the deepest respect and reverence. Since her abduction from her home, she had been a frequent visiter to the monastery, and the consolatory and instructive converse of its very reverent lady abbess, soothed her mind and spirits, and had greatly to do in restoring their

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tone, which had received so great a shock by that transaction.

The lady abbess was now very ill, which induced the gentle lady-maiden to be a daily visiter to the retreat, whither she was attended by the old house-keeper, Agatha, and the armourer, who marched in warlike array, at the head of a score of the Lord Godolphin's stoutest retainers, for the effectual protection of the young lady.

These visits continued from day to day, without any particular alteration taking place in the health of the lady-abbess, or any thing occurring worth recording, while time waned on, when the messenger was expected back from his journey to the Holy Land.

END OF VOL. I.

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